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- The top RHS-trialled **TULIPS** to plant now
- **FORAGING RECIPES** for autumn bounty
- Meet the worthy **WINNERS** of our Future Fund



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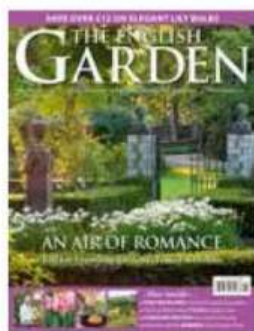
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**On the cover:**

Ablington Manor,
Gloucestershire (page 30).

Photograph: Clive Nichols

THE ENGLISH GARDEN AWARDS

2014

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Of The Year**
David Wheeler

2013

Garden Media Guild
**Finalist, Garden
Writer Of The Year**
Tamsin Westhorpe

2012

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Journalist Of The Year
Stephanie Mahon

2011

Garden Media Guild
Environmental Award
Anne Gatti

2010

Garden Media Guild
**Gardening Column
Of The Year**
Mark Diacono

2009

Garden Media Guild
**Gardening Column
Of The Year**
Jackie Bennett

Garden Media Guild
**New Garden Media
Talent Of The Year**
Stephanie Mahon

2008

Garden Media Guild
New Writer Award
Joe Reardon-Smith

A beautiful garden can wrap you up in its otherworldly charms and transport you to a place where all the problems of the world disappear



JOHN CAMPBELL

We have all experienced that magical moment upon walking into a garden when things fall still for a moment, and the vision before you overtakes your senses and elicits an 'Oooh', an 'Aaah' or a 'Wow!' Perhaps that moment was what set you on your path to being a gardener. A beautiful garden can wrap you up in its otherworldly charms and transport you to a place where all the problems and realities of the world disappear. It is this quality we are celebrating in this special issue featuring **ROMANTIC GARDENS**. These exceptional places have been created and maintained by couples with a passion for plants and a love of gardening, and it shows.

At Shepherd House, 50 years of Sir Charles and Lady Ann Fraser's lives together are stitched into the fabric of the garden (page 40); while at Haddon Hall, the family seat has been given a fresh lease of life under Lord and Lady Edward Manners and the designer Arne Maynard (page 20); and Ablington Manor is the epitome of a romantic English garden (page 30).

In this issue, we also visit the winners of The English Garden **FUTURE FUND**, the bursary scheme we set up last year to help gardening projects in the UK. Flower Pod Southwell, a social enterprise in Nottinghamshire, was chosen by public vote on our website earlier this year, and we have been back to the project to find out how things are developing since winning the funding (page 57). The application form for next year's scheme will be available in the November issue, so don't miss out.

This is the season to choose **TULIPS** for next spring, so we found out which new and old varieties got their Award of Garden Merit confirmed in the recent RHS trial at Wisley (page 77); and Andy McIndoe tells us about the **SHRUBS** everyone should have in their gardens (page 85). All this, plus Tamsin's top tasks for the month (page 67) and some tasty **RECIPES** to make with foraged goodies from the hedgerows (page 93) - it's still a busy time for us gardeners.

Stephanie

Stephanie Mahon, Editor

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CONTENTS

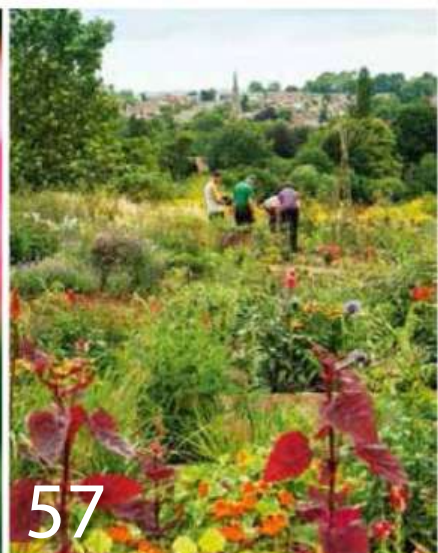
🌿 On the cover

OCTOBER

- 9 NATIONAL TREASURE Beautiful Bateman's**
Rudyard Kipling's former home amid the Sussex Weald
- 11 NEWS & EVENTS Out & about** This month's unmissable events, and news stories from the gardening world
- 17 A NEW LEAF Eye candy** Jane Perrone sweet talks her way through some lovely leaves that add a little sugar to our lives
- 57 FUTURE FUND WINNERS Dare, dream & think big** Last year's winners of our Future Fund bursary
- 63 SHOPPING Fall delights** Tools and accessories for tidying up the garden, harvesting and planting bulbs
- 67 IN THE GARDEN October** Tips on taking hardwood cuttings, protecting plants, pruning and dividing
- 75 GARDEN PATHS Park life** Community ranger Wayne Sedgwick on his job protecting wildlife and conservation areas
- 105 THE REVIEWER Latest books** An interview with Carol Klein, and our pick of the new releases
- 114 MY FAVOURITE THINGS Toby Buckland**
The nurseryman and TV gardener shares his horticultural treats

DESIGN

- 49 PRIVATE VIEW Metropolitan Med** A chic, contemporary courtyard garden in London, which can be enjoyed all year round
- 55 THREE OF A KIND Screen icons** Garden designer Ruth Willmott on 'growing your own' privacy using plants and trees




GARDENS

- 20 **DERBYSHIRE** **Fairytale ending** After two centuries of neglect, a ravishing modern take on Elizabethan style at Haddon Hall
- 30 **GLOUCESTERSHIRE** **Romantic reverie** The essence of English romance - Ablington Manor's floriferous garden
- 40 **SCOTLAND** **The look of love** A dedicated couple who complement each other's talents have created a very special garden
- 99 **LONDON** **Hidden gardens** A sneak preview of three city gardens that feature in a lavish new book on green spaces in London



PLANTS

- 77  **PLANT FOCUS** **Champions league** The very best tulips - old and new - awarded the coveted RHS Award of Garden Merit
- 83 **PLANT STORY** **Blade runner** Karl Foerster is a name familiar to many gardeners for the grasses named after him - but who was he?
- 85 **TOP 10 SHRUBS** **Bush craft** Shrubs give so much in the garden, for little recognition - Andy McIndoe chooses 10 of the best
- 91 **PLANT SWATCH** **Beauty queens** Rose breeder Philip Harkness selects three easy-to-grow roses to plant this autumn
- 93  **FORAGING** **Wild at heart** Forager Liz Knight uses the garden and countryside to create recipes for tasty autumn dishes

OFFERS

- 81  **EXCLUSIVE!** **Save over £12 on lilies**
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BEAUTIFUL BATEMAN'S

You won't be disappointed with your visit to the former home of writer Rudyard Kipling, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907. 'This area is the first thing people see as they arrive,' says Gardens and Estate Manager Len Bernamont. The productive garden (*pictured*) is packed with an orchard, vegetable patch, soft fruit trees and a cutting border. 'The veg patch is a remnant of the Second World War Dig For Victory campaign, but is now used to grow vegetables for hungry visitors in the tearoom. All of the flowers from the cutting border are used to make the floral displays in the house,' explains Len. 'There's only one remaining apple tree from Kipling's original orchard, but a living cutting has been grafted onto a new rootstock to continue his legacy.'

It takes two full-time gardeners, one seasonal gardener and 25 volunteers to maintain the gardens. 'We dig our own compost in the vegetable patch to keep the ground fertile, and carry out a winter prune to maintain the structure of the fruit trees,' he says. Elsewhere in the garden, you can wander the manicured lawns and clipped yew hedges.

If you're in the area, why not pop in on Sunday 18 October and celebrate Apple Day? There will be plenty of tastings, with 20 different varieties, children's activities, and even a chance to make your own fresh apple juice on a traditional press. You can purchase produce from the shop and enjoy an apple-based menu in the tearoom too. Bateman's Lane, Burwash, East Sussex TN19 7DS. Tel: +44 (0)1435 882302. www.nationaltrust.org.uk

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NEWS & EVENTS

Sue Bradley digs up the latest stories, including the National Gardens Scheme's first annual lecture, a literary festival and gardens to visit with autumn colour

The art of comfort



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IMAGES/EXBURY GARDENS - COLIN ROBERTS
PERENNIAL LEGACY GARDEN - LEE BEELARIS



Five gardens for autumn colour

● ANGLESEY ABBEY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Stroll along sweeping avenues and admire colourful carpets of cyclamen and bright displays of berries. Lode, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB25 9EJ. Tel: +44 (0)1223 810080. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/anglesey-abbey

● BATSFORD ARBORETUM, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Be immersed in a blaze of autumn colour with maples, cherries and liquidambar taking centre stage in woodlands that once belonged to the Mitford family. October events include photography workshops and fungi forays. Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire GL56 9QB. Tel: +44 (0)1386 701441. www.batsarb.co.uk

● BORDE HILL, WEST SUSSEX

Linger in a Grade II-listed landscape, containing 17 acres of formal gardens and picturesque lakes,

during weekends in October and Halloween week. Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 1XP. Tel: +44 (0)1444 450326. www.bordehill.co.uk

● EXBURY GARDENS, HAMPSHIRE

See National Collections of Nyssa and Oxydendrum among the many rare trees within the Rothschild Collection at Exbury (*above*), a garden described by one visitor as 'heaven with the gates open'. Exbury, Southampton, Hampshire SO45 1AZ. Tel: +44 (0)23 8089 1203. www.exbury.co.uk

● GREEN ISLAND GARDENS, ESSEX

Soak up the stunning autumn colour provided by dozens of acers, cotinus, nyssa and *Parrotia persica* along with various perennials. Green Island, Park Road, Ardleigh, Essex CO7 7SP. Tel: +44 (0)1206 230455. www.greenislandgardens.co.uk



The gift that keeps on giving

Perennial's new legacy fundraising campaign highlights the vital importance of gifts in Wills to the charity.

The UK's only charity dedicated to helping people who work in horticulture and their families when times get tough, more than half of Perennial's income comes from legacy donations. It launched its new campaign in style by winning Gold and Best In Show with a garden designed by Paul Hervey-Brookes at RHS Flower Show Tatton Park (*left*). For more information, visit www.perennial.org.uk →



Gardens in the literary limelight

Hatfield House in Hertfordshire (above) will host the Garden Museum's Literary Festival on Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 October, and is a must for your diary.

The line-up includes Alan Titchmarsh, George Plumptre, Dan Pearson, Tom Stuart-Smith and Alys Fowler, as well as Dr David Starkey, Alison Weir, Richard Mabey, Dr Philip Mansel, Tim Richardson and more. Themes which will be discussed over the weekend include the gardens of Louis XIV, 'The Cabaret of Plants', our fickle idea of what nature is, and the real Vita Sackville-West. Hatfield House's head gardener will be leading tours of the gardens and park throughout the weekend. Day tickets start at £120 (or £95 for a Friend of the museum). For more details, visit www.gardenmuseum.org.uk

PHOENIX TREE AT KNOLL

An iconic tree that blew down during storms more than a year ago could make a dramatic recovery. The owners of Knoll Gardens in Dorset are keenly watching the progress of the fallen *Eucalyptus chapmaniana*,

which had been the tallest tree at the specialist grasses nursery in Wimborne, Dorset.

All appeared lost when the shallow-rooted tree and a Monterey pine were blown down in gales in February 2014. Owner Neil Lucas and his team tidied up the eucalyptus, and now think it is re-growing. 'We hope it will be our own Phoenix tree,' he said. www.knollgardens.co.uk



ALAN REVEALS ALL

Spend an evening with Alan Titchmarsh when he delivers the National Gardens Scheme's first annual lecture.

Britain's favourite gardener will be taking an affectionate look at his life in horticulture and beyond at the Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR, at 7pm on Tuesday 27 October.

The event is being sponsored by Investec Wealth & Investment, and all proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to charities supported by the National Gardens Scheme. Tickets cost £20. For more details and to buy tickets, visit www.ngs.org.uk →



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COMMUNITY SPIRIT

More than 8,000 volunteers have devoted over 150,000 hours of their spare time to earn a place in this year's Britain in Bloom finals. Final judging has taken place, and the winners will be announced on 16 October.

The sky's the limit

Plant hunter and gardener Tom Hart Dyke (right) will be sharing some of his discoveries and recalling his ordeal at the hands of kidnappers in the Colombian jungle when he hosts The Roof Gardens Gardening Club on Sunday 18 October.

His appearance will be rounded off with a tour of three themed gardens at the spectacular venue on the sixth floor of 99 Kensington High Street in London - the English Woodland garden, the Tudor garden and the Spanish garden. The gardening club meets from 9am to noon. Tickets cost £10 for members and £15 for non-members, which goes towards children's charity Starlight. For more details, call +44 (0)20 7368 3981 or visit www.roofgardens.virgin.com



WHAT'S ON: OCTOBER

PLANT FAIR AT GREAT DIXTER

Saturday 3-Sunday 4 October, East Sussex

A host of specialist nurserymen from the UK and Europe will be selling plenty of plants, providing expert advice and giving talks. Admission costs £8, including entrance into the gardens (right), and is free for Friends of Great Dixter and annual ticket holders. Tel: +44 (0)1797 252878 or visit www.greatdixter.co.uk



AUTUMN BIRD-WATCHING AT BARNSDALE GARDENS

Sunday 4 October, Leicestershire

Grab your binoculars and join local expert Philip Rudkin for a bird-spotting tour of Barnsdale. You can also see local craftsmen building bird-boxes for sale. Free with garden admission: adult £7.50, concession £6.50, child £3.50, family (up to five) £21. For more details, tel: +44 (0)1572 813200 or visit www.barnsdalegardens.co.uk

AUTUMN BONSAI SHOW AT CAPEL MANOR GARDENS

Sunday 4 October, Middlesex

You won't want to miss this magnificent display of bonsai trees in all their autumnal glory. Adults: £6.50. Children: £3.50. 10am-4pm. For more details, tel: 0845 6122122 (ext 1200) or visit www.capelmanorgardens.co.uk



FUNGUS DAY AT NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDEN OF WALES

Sunday 11 October, Wales

Lots of fun fungi-related walks, talks, trails, displays, craft demonstrations, wild mushroom identification, fungi drawing workshops, stalls and lots for the kids to do too. Anyone dressed as a fairy or elf gets in for free. Tel: +44 (0)1558 667149 or visit www.gardenofwales.org.uk

AUTUMNAL CLASSICAL & JAZZ CONCERT AT THE BETH CHATTO GARDENS

Saturday 17 October, Essex

Local musicians Floral Harmony will perform the first in a new series of seasonal themed concerts. Tickets cost £15 including access to the gardens from 5pm (and a chance to meet the musicians) with a glass of wine; or £29.50 including a two-course after-show supper. Tel: +44 (0)1206 822007 or visit www.bethchatto.co.uk

RHS LONDON SHADES OF AUTUMN SHOW AT THE RHS HORTICULTURAL HALLS

Friday 23-Saturday 24 October, London

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Eye CANDY

Jane Perrone sweet talks her way through some lovely leaves that add a little sugar to our lives

ILLUSTRATIONS HELEN CAMPBELL

In 1964, Marjorie Craddock wrote in *The Guardian* newspaper: 'The time may not be far distant when sorrel and sweet cicely, tarragon and thyme, borage and basil... are nearly as common in a good cook's garden as the mint, sage, horseradish and parsley which are doubtless there already.' More than 50 years on, her prediction has largely come true -

candy them in the same way as angelica, pickle the green seedpods, and even batter and deep fry the flowerheads, Japanese tempura-style. Turn to page 18 for Fiona Bird's recipe for sweet cicely cookies.

Herb expert Jekka McVicar suspects its relative obscurity can be put down to two causes. Firstly, the seeds must be stratified - exposed to the moist cold of winter, or

winter. Secondly, sweet cicely is an umbellifer - a member of the carrot family - along with a wonderful diversity of plants that range from the deadly poisonous hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) to the edible wild carrot (*Daucus carota*). There are complex charts to help foragers navigate their way through which umbels have hollow stems and which solid, and which are hairy and which smooth - thus safely identifying which are safe to eat and which will land them in hospital - or worse.

This may put people off the raising of such a plant. And yet →

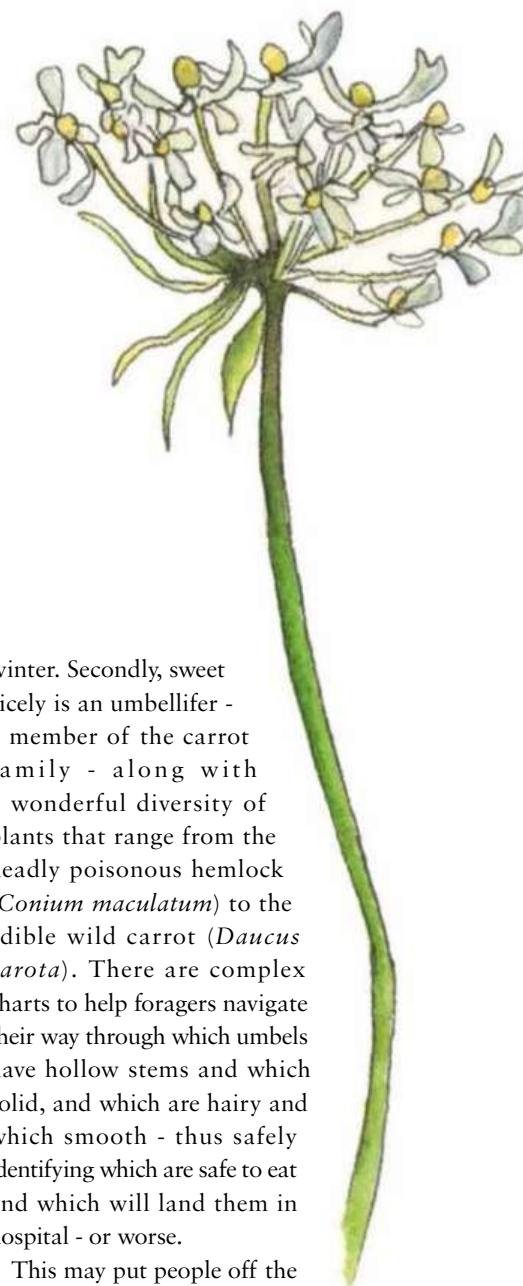
Sweet cicely added to chopped rhubarb allows you to cut down from 100g of sugar to just a tablespoon

but sweet cicely (*Myrrhis odorata*) remains underrated and largely absent from the average domestic herb garden.

But why? It has many admirable qualities: it is hardy and harvestable as early as February or March; it relishes the shady spots that many herbs shun, and has pretty fern-like leaves and flowerheads that look like fluffy white clouds. And unlike most other edible leaves, it is a worthy sugar substitute. Added to fruit, its sweet, aniseed-flavoured leaves and stems cut through acidity and reduce the quantity of sugar needed to make the dish palatable. James Wong notes in his book *Homegrown Revolution* that 'three fat sprigs' of sweet cicely added to 10 sticks of chopped rhubarb allows you to cut down from 100g of sugar to just a tablespoon. In an age where refined sugar is increasingly positioned as the new danger to our health, we should be selling shares in sweet cicely.

Even better, the whole plant is edible: add the tender leaves to salads, cook the roots or

a simulation of those conditions in the fridge - to break dormancy and germinate. This extra procedure puts nurseries off raising plants, and even nurseries that do propagate may not have any plants if there is no frost one



SWEET CICELY GROWING TIPS

Expert advice from Jekka McVicar, owner of Jekka's Herbetum near Bristol:

Soil: 'Sweet cicely needs moist, humus-rich soil that is reasonably well drained. If it's in a slightly acid, light soil it can be invasive, but in clay soil it stays where you put it,' says Jekka.

Cultivation: 'If you want to raise plants from seed, it is important to make sure they are exposed to frost - known as stratification. Mix the seed with damp vermiculite, and put it in the salad compartment of the fridge and leave it until it chits (germinates), then prick it out into a pot or module. Or if you have a friend with a plant, dig up some roots and take root cuttings: just make sure you get an 'eye' with your section of root.'

Position: 'Sweet cicely is useless in a pot, as it has got a long taproot. It is a hedgerow plant, so will do well in dappled shade.'

Harvesting: 'Cut down the plant after flowering if you don't want it to seed about. I've used it to make an extremely good wine. The root is good grated and put in puddings; the seeds are lovely with cabbage and they take away the 'boarding school' smell.'

→ sweet cicely is perhaps one of the easiest of the umbels to pin down, because every part of the plant when crushed gives off an unmistakable scent of aniseed that you would be pressed to confuse with any of its umbellifer lookalikes. Another edible umbellifer, cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), is an annual fixture in RHS Chelsea Flower Show gardens, but I can never understand why few designers think of putting sweet cicely in its place. Both plants can be equally persistent (some may uncharitably say 'invasive') in the garden, but I think the latter is of far more use in the kitchen, and springs up again quickly, even when cut down to the ground. As the doyenne of cottage gardening Margery Fish put it in her book *Cottage Garden Flowers*, it is a plant that 'possesses a way of keeping itself in any garden to which it takes a fancy. It puts its seedlings in odd corners, and one has not the heart to uproot that dainty ferny foliage'.

It may have been from the cottage garden that sweet cicely first escaped into the wild,



Japanese caught on to stevia as far back as the 1970s. Lippia, on the other hand, although even sweeter (from 1,000 to 1,500 times sweeter than sugar, depending on who you ask) has yet to catch on in the same way. Once you've got past the intense sweetness, its leaves also contain camphor (if you can't conjure up the smell, think mothballs and you're there).

Take a nibble on these plants, and be prepared for a pleasant shock. They taste very, very sweet

where it can still be found along hedgerows. Although it is sometimes considered a native, it has probably only been in Britain for a few centuries. As Rosemary FitzGerald points out in her book *A Gardener's Guide To Native Plants of Britain and Ireland*, the fact that there are few alternative common names for this plant is 'another sign it has not been here for many centuries'.

It's not the only leaf that offers a sweet surprise. Two relative newcomers to the British grow-your-own scene are sugar leaf (*Stevia rebaudiana* - above) from South America, and Aztec sweet herb (*Lippia dulcis* - right) from Mexico and Central America. Take a nibble on either of these plants and be prepared for a pleasant shock.

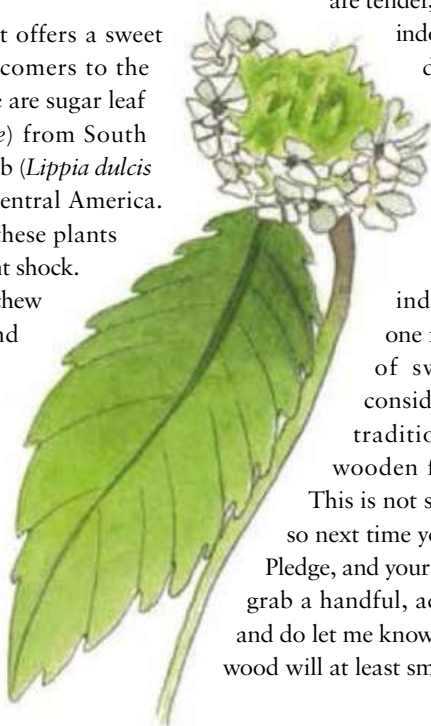
They taste very, very sweet: chew a leaf for a few seconds and you'll feel as if you've necked a whole pack of artificial sweetener. Stevia, which is about 300 times as sweet as sugar, has proven more popular. In recent years, it's been processed and packaged as a real calorie-conscious sugar alternative - indeed, the

Before you start adding lippia leaves to every meal, though, it's worth noting that camphor is a nerve-system toxin if taken in large, regular amounts, so exercise caution.

And from a practical point of view for the gardener, stevia and lippia are more of a pain to grow. Given the climate of their native homes, it will be no surprise to know that they are tender, so need to be brought

indoors once temperatures drop in winter. Sweet cicely, on the other hand, given a moist spot and a patch of bare soil, can be left to do its thing indefinitely. If you need one final piece of evidence of sweet cicely's value, consider this: its seeds were traditionally used to polish wooden furniture and floors.

This is not something I have tried, so next time you run out of a can of Pledge, and your sweet cicely is seeding, grab a handful, add some elbow grease and do let me know how you get on. Your wood will at least smell good, I'd think. ♦



RECIPE: SWEET CICELY COOKIES

'After devouring these cookies, guests realise how tasty sweet cicely really is,' says Fiona Bird, food writer, forager and BBC MasterChef finalist.

Makes 24 cookies

Ingredients

- 125g unsalted butter, plus extra for greasing
- 1/4 cup (50g) caster sugar
- 1 & 1/3 cups (180g) all-purpose plain flour
- Large handful (2.5 tablespoons) finely chopped sweet cicely leaves
- 1 egg yolk

Method

- **Preheat the oven** to 350°F/180°C/gas mark 4. Grease two baking sheets, or use non-stick baking sheets.
- **In a mixing bowl**, cream the butter and sugar together.
- **Add the flour and sweet cicely leaves**, and bind the mixture together with the egg yolk.
- **Knead the dough lightly**, and divide in half. Roll into two 12cm x 4cm sausage-shaped rolls. Wrap each roll in cling film, and refrigerate for at least 20 minutes.
- **Cut each roll into 1cm slices**, and place them on the greased or non-stick baking sheets. Bake for about 12-15 minutes until the cookies are lightly golden. Remove the baking sheets from the oven; leave the cookies to harden for two to three minutes, then place on a cooling rack.
- **Store the cookies in an airtight tin** (but they are sure to be eaten quickly!).

This recipe comes from The Forager's Kitchen by Fiona Bird, published by CICO Books (£16.99).



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ENGLAND

Fairytale ending

Having been neglected for two centuries, the gardens at Haddon Hall are now a ravishing modern take on the Elizabethan style →

PHOTOGRAPHS MARIANNE MAJERUS | WORDS JACKIE BENNETT



Roses are a huge part of the planting at Haddon Hall, not only against the house, but in the borders too.

The story of Haddon Hall in the Wye Valley in Derbyshire is every bit as romantic as its stone exterior and rose-filled gardens would suggest. Built between 1530 and 1580 by the Vernon family, it was a great Tudor house that passed by marriage to the Manners family, who still own it today. Yet by 1703 it was deserted - the family had left in favour of Belvoir Hall, and it stood empty and forlorn for more than two centuries.

It was the grandparents of the current owner - Edward, Lord Manners, 11th Duke of Rutland - who were responsible for its *Sleeping Beauty*-style rescue. In the 1920s, while Edward's grandfather, the 9th Duke, worked to make the house habitable, Lady Kathleen turned to the garden.

The Elizabethan terraces were still intact, but the yew topiaries had turned into trees and the house was swamped by ivy. 'It was dark and Gothic,' says Lord Edward, 'something the Victorians would have loved. But my grandmother wanted light, and cut down the old yews to reveal the original terraces, and started to put in new planting.' She planned borders,



'What is special about Haddon Hall is that the house and garden were conceived as one'

put in the central pool and fountain, and replaced the ivy on the house with roses - her greatest passion.

'What is special about Haddon Hall is that the house and garden were conceived as one,' says Lord Edward. His ancestors, Dorothy Vernon and her husband Sir John Manners, built the Long Gallery in around 1580 30m long by 5m wide to make the most of the light and the view of the gardens.

The windows of the Long Gallery - an important feature of Elizabethan houses - were an extravagant addition, involving hundreds of tiny panes of glass that visually brought the outside in. Similarly, the inside of the gallery, with its decorative panelling featuring flowers and foliage, made the connection with the garden that visitors could see down below.

ABOVE
A wildflower edging was added by designer Arne Maynard.

'The garden was a talking point,' says Lord Edward. 'Its balustrades and stone steps, its 'rooms' and walls echo what is inside the house; the one beckoning you on to see the other.'

Just after the Second World War, Lord Edward's aunt and uncle took over the running of the estate, and kept the gardens going. But when Edward inherited Haddon Hall in 1999, they needed refreshing. 'It was a floriferous garden famous for delphiniums and roses, but it needed something new.'

Designer Arne Maynard had already worked on the Manners' private garden, and was the obvious choice to inject a contemporary element into the gardens of the hall. 'We wanted to make that connection between the house and the garden, which had been lost over the years,' says Lord Edward.

'Arne helped us bring a contemporary interpretation of the Elizabethan period into the garden with the knot garden and the wildflowers.' Arne has been responsible for designing two of the main terraces - the Fountain Terrace and Bowling Green Terrace - and continues to be involved in the long-term planning. The day-to-day running of the gardens is down to head gardener Jayne Wanless, who took up her role four years ago.

The garden is a series of terraces that make the best of the steep slope on which the house is built, above the River Wye. On the same level as the house is the Fountain Terrace, where clipped beech and hornbeams have been underplanted with a band of wildflowers.

Above the Fountain Terrace is the Bowling Green Terrace. Bowling greens were an essential part of higher-end Elizabethan gardens, but the open green space has been augmented with



a knot garden, edged in teucrium and set with rosemary, lavender, violas and specimen lilies. One border has been given over to dye plants that would have been grown in the period - tansy, woad and madder. Higher up still, and with fabulous views over the river, the Top Terrace has been given a different scheme, with block planting and strong colours. 'I like plants that clash,' says Jayne. 'I'm in the Christopher Lloyd school of planting, using yellow inulas and deep-red daylilies.'

The lower terraces are spectacularly enclosed with the old medieval buttresses of the walls - there has been a defended building on this site since the 12th century. The walls are planted with anything that likes clinging onto the side of a rock, including santolina, aubretia and self-seeded verbascums. At ground level, borders of perennials hug the base of the buttresses. In the centre stands a huge yew, the last surviving remnant of the 17th century. →

RIGHT, FROM TOP The Bowling Green Terrace with rosemary and lavender knot garden; the Fountain Terrace, which drops to the lower terrace and the river, features beech topiary; white foxgloves outside the walls of the top terrace, with *Campanula latifolia* 'Alba'.



Blocks of copper beech at the four corners of the fountain give a contemporary feel, and lead the eye to the rolling countryside.

It stood empty and forlorn for more than two centuries... but it is now evolving into a place where the garden is an integral part of its past, present and future





**LEFT, CLOCKWISE
FROM TOP LEFT**

Rosa Gentle
Hermione;
R. 'Scharlachglut';
R. x richardii;
R. 'Madame
Grégoire
Staechelin'.

BELOW *Rosa*
'François Juranville'
growing in the
central courtyard.

→ One of the most prominent features here is the rose collection. With stone walls, on the house and enclosing the terraces, roses were a natural choice of climber for Lord Edward's grandmother; many of them date to the first half of the 20th century.

The rose pruning and training begins in August, and the team aims to have it finished before Christmas. 'It's actually my favourite job,' says Jayne. 'We start with ones that have finished flowering, and then move on to the ones down on the river terraces (as that is a colder part of the garden), working our way back up towards the house - and hoping the bad weather doesn't stop us.' Jayne is aided by a part-time gardener, two volunteers, and has help with the hedges and lawn cutting.

Despite being in a relatively high rainfall county, the borders at the base of the stone walls of Haddon Hall can get very dry. Watering is kept to a minimum, but the borders by the house itself do have a drip irrigation system.

The farm at Haddon has organic status, and even in the garden, they try





to use all of the garden's own home-made compost and keep chemicals to a minimum. The trouble is, says Jayne, 'the compost heaps are on the top terrace, so it's a long way down when we need some on the river level!'

Jayne retrained in horticulture at the age of 36, and feels so lucky that her first permanent job was at Haddon. On becoming head gardener, she describes herself as 'being in at the deep end. I was following in the footsteps of a head gardener who had been here for 25 years, and had such a wealth of knowledge. But I just feel so happy to be here. It's a dream job'.

She works closely with Lord and Lady Edward to ensure that the garden is meeting the needs of visitors and of the family. Lady Edward is very passionate about the connection between the house and garden. She oversees the cutting garden, and makes sure there are always fresh flowers throughout the house. 'We are really keen to bring the history of the house alive again through the garden,' she says. 'We have an old falconry store in front of the curtain wall that we shall

ABOVE A border filled with stachys, geraniums, astrantia and roses. **RIGHT** Above the table and chairs, *Rosa 'Mannington Mauve Rambler'* is trained spectacularly against the house wall.



turn into a garden interpretation room. It is important when you are walking round the garden that you understand the different phases of its history.'

Both Jayne and Lady Edward agree that their emphasis has been on trying to extend the interest throughout the season. 'It was a garden for summer,' says Lady Edward, 'when the family used to spend time here. Now we know that visitors want interest throughout the year, and we are developing our borders with bulbs in spring and more autumn planting to reflect that.'

Haddon Hall may not ever shake off its *Sleeping Beauty* image - and it would be a shame if it did - but it is now evolving into a place where the garden is much more than an adjunct to the house. It is an integral part of its past, present and future.

Haddon Hall, Bakewell DE45 1LA. Open daily until 30 Sept. In Oct, open Sat, Sun & Mon; and daily 24 Oct-1 Nov. Tel: +44 (0)1629 812855. www.haddonhall.co.uk

Top tips from Haddon →

Haddon Hall gardens notebook



HADDON ON FILM

Haddon Hall and its estate have been used as a location in no less than three film versions of *Jane Eyre*, as well as *That Boleyn Girl* and *The Princess Bride*. The fairytale setting by the river has its own romantic tale to tell. Legend has it that in 1563, the daughter of the house, Dorothy Vernon, eloped over this bridge to meet her husband-to-be. The story stuck and it was forever after known as the Dorothy Vernon Bridge.

Garden challenges

ROSES: The biggest challenge at Haddon is pruning the hundreds of wall-trained roses. There is no other way to do it but with ladders and secateurs. It takes the gardeners several months to work around the whole garden.

ALSO IN THE AREA

If you are visiting Haddon Hall, why not also try:

- **GARDEN** **Chatsworth** Only a few miles away. Within its 105 acres are the spectacular Cascade, the Emperor Fountain, maze and kitchen garden. Bakewell, Derbyshire DE45 1PP. Tel: +44 (0)1246 565300. www.chatsworth.org
- **NURSERY** **Longstone Hardy Plant Nursery** In the nearby Peak District town of Bakewell (famous for its pastry and tarts). Station Road, Great Longstone, near Bakewell, Derbyshire DE45 1TS. Tel: +44 (0)7762 083674 or (0)1629 640136.
- **PLACE TO STAY** **The Peacock at Rowsley** Owned by Lord and Lady Edward; the gardens are cared for by the Haddon Hall team. Grade-II listed boutique hotel with 15 bedrooms, serving freshly cooked local produce. Derbyshire DE4 2EB. Tel: +44 (0)1629 733518. www.thepeacockatrowsley.com

INSIDE OUT

The Elizabethans pioneered the idea of taking the outside in (and vice versa). Garden features such as steps, pavilions and balustrades were intended to make a direct link with the house. At Haddon, the shapes of the balustrades and steps in the garden are duplicated inside with similar shapes cut into the wood panelling in the Long Gallery.



MAKE ROOM FOR ROSES

More than 100 roses are grown at Haddon, but there is always room for more. The gardeners spend around four months of the year training and pruning them. Many date back to the first half of the 20th century, when Lord Edward's grandmother and aunt were planting them - like the climber *Rosa 'Léontine Gervais'*, above.

Tips from Lady Edward & the garden team

- **Try to be as eco-aware as possible.** We mulch the beds with our home-made compost to cut down on watering, and use chemicals only as a last resort.
- **Leave wildflower areas** until the grasses and flowers have seeded. You may have a little untidiness, but the meadow will regenerate. If ox-eye daisies take over (which they have here), dig them out and replace with plug plants of other species. Do this when the grass has been cut, or wait until the following spring.
- **Don't cover the base of your clematis.** This is an established piece of advice to keep the roots cool (they famously like to have their heads in sun and feet in shade), but putting pipes or tiles around the lower stems can encourage slugs and snails to collect there. Our clematis have done much better since we removed the drainpipes.
- **If you have too many roses** and too little wall space, as we do, the answer is to train the stems around in a spiral rather than spreading them out in a fan. This encourages flowers and keeps the climbers within bounds.
- **Cut down perennials** soon after they have flowered, right down to ground level. Water and mulch, and they will soon produce new foliage and perhaps another crop of flowers.



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The terrace of the four-acre garden at Ablington Manor is laid in reclaimed York stone, and punctuated by sun-loving plants such as helianthemum and armeria.



Romantic reverie

Ablington Manor is the essence of English romance - an historic house with a floriferous garden leading down to the river →

PHOTOGRAPHS CLIVE NICHOLS | WORDS VICTORIA SUMMERLEY

A blington Manor wears its history not on its sleeve, but above its imposing entrance. The faces of five monarchs - Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, Mary Tudor, Mary's husband Philip of Spain, and Elizabeth's heir, James I - are carved in stone alongside the date 1590. It is a tangible reminder of a time when allegiance to a particular faith or faction could cost you your life - even in Ablington, an idyllic Cotswolds hamlet in the Coln valley, around 10 miles from Cirencester.

The only visible sign of royal allegiance since those uncertain days is the 'Catherine Wheel', a circular pergola in the gardens at Ablington Manor. *Rosa filipes* 'Kiftsgate' and *Rosa* 'Paul's Himalayan Musk' scramble up its sides, interwoven with the tiny purple and white star-shaped flowers of *Clematis x triternata* 'Rubromarginata'.

It replaced an ancient apple tree, which finally collapsed under the weight of the 'Kiftsgate' rose that used it as a support. The pergola was put in around the time of the wedding of Prince William to Catherine Middleton, hence its nickname.

The gardens at Ablington encompass around four acres. The back of the house faces south and slightly west, and looks out over lawns and borders that slope gently down to the banks of the river Coln.



The house looks out over lawns and borders that slope gently down to the banks of the river

On the other side of the river is the gazebo, behind which the land rises steeply to form a wooded ridge. If the word 'gazebo' makes you think of a rickety wooden structure or plastic rain shelter, dismiss this image from your mind immediately. Owner Robert Cooper's gazebo looks as if it was built by some Norman forebear, homesick for the *chateaux* and

pigeonniers of his native land. In fact, Robert designed it himself, and it acts both as a focal point and as a foil for the house. It is two storeys high, built of Cotswold stone, and has a hipped roof, which gives the building its Gallic flavour. It is big enough to use for formal dinner parties, and even boasts a kitchen and a shower room. →



ABOVE Irises and nectaroscordum line the terrace, and give way to yellow and green yew forms. The towering yew topiary beyond the sundial is jokingly referred to by Robert as 'Henry Moore's last work'. **BELOW LEFT**

The serpentine borders include a mixture of shrubs, roses and herbaceous perennials. **OPPOSITE** The manor was built in 1590. It opens onto the terrace, and then a great lawn edged with borders.







LEFT The River Coln flows past the gazebo, which was built to owner Robert's own design. It lines up perfectly with the house, meaning the buildings act as focal points of the views from both ends of the garden.

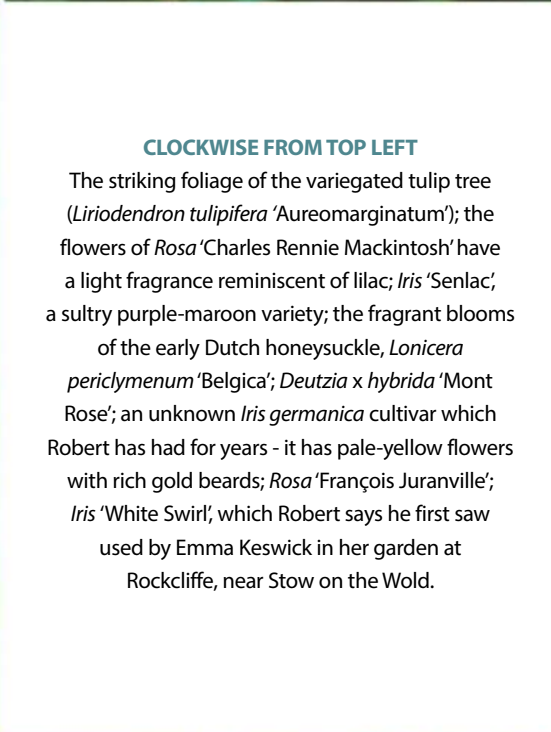
→ The soil at Ablington is typical Cotswold brash; a thin stony layer over a bedrock of oolitic limestone. It is both the delight and the despair of Cotswold gardeners, who love the fact that it is free-draining, and warms up quickly in spring, but deplore the fact that it is drought-prone, and that straight carrots and parsnips are the exception rather than the norm.

There is no kitchen garden at Ablington now, but this is nothing to do with the difficulties of growing straight root vegetables. When the Cooper family arrived here 40 years ago, the enormous walled vegetable plot was overgrown and far too big to be a practical proposition for a modern household. Half of it is now a tennis court, where roses crowd along the stone walls like spectators at Wimbledon. There is even a bed of *Lilium regale* at one end, which gives the effect of a royal box. The other half of the garden is a formal design of two wooden pergolas surmounted by twisted iron ogee arches either side of a central pool. Roses and clematis grow on the pergolas, while beds of iris and alliums are set out on either side of the pool designed by Robert and made by Cotswold Ironworks.

Robert and his wife Prudence insist that they have not tried consciously to create a romantic English garden at Ablington - although they do grow a tree lily called 'Honeymoon'. But perhaps there is something in the English DNA that makes us hard-wired to produce gardens that combine geometric formality with billowing, floriferous planting.

Perhaps it is the climate; Gloucestershire's annual 738mm rainfall is certainly a useful accomplice when it comes to making gardens that combine the delicate charm of woodland and wildflowers with statuesque herbaceous and shrub borders and the chunky topiary of yew and box.

Prudence describes her approach as 'making pictures', and as a result, Ablington is full of vignettes that provide satisfying details and corners to explore within the broader landscape of the garden as a whole. In the walled garden, for example, where clematis and roses climb the →



RIGHT One footbridge across the River Coln leads to a colourful 'garden barge' - a floating garden of moisture-loving plants. This is the only place in the garden Prudence indulges in hot colours. **BELOW** This pink granite memorial was commissioned by Robert's great-grandmother to mark the death of her beloved horse. It is dedicated 'to Polly, a favourite mare' and surrounded by a mass of *Iris* 'White Swirl'.



The garden is full of vignettes that provide satisfying details and corners to explore

→ pergolas on either side, there are two beds where the little maroon bobble flowers of *Allium sphaerocephalon* pop up above the yellow-and-green-striped leaves of *Iris pallida* 'Argentea Variegata'. The effect is both charming and cheeky, but Prudence refuses to take any credit for it, saying that she copied the idea from plantsman and landscape designer Arne Maynard.

One of the 'pictures' created by Robert and Prudence was installed at the urging of their new head gardener, Roland Earl. He was keen to make a wildflower garden on the west side of the garden. The Coopers were encouraging, but not convinced. 'Our experience of wildflower meadows was that they were too much effort, and never work,' says Robert.

Roland was undeterred, however, and prepared the ground carefully by spraying off any perennial weeds and grass, and sowing a mixture of grasses and flowers supplied by Cotswold Seeds.

The Coopers are thoroughly won over. The effect in midsummer is of a lacy haze of corn chamomile (*Anthemis arvensis*) punctuated by poppies and the purple-pink flowers of corn cockle (*Agrostemma githago*). What could be more romantic than that?

Ablington Manor usually opens one day a year for charity. Check www.khh.org.uk for 2016 dates.

The Coopers' top tips →



Ablington Manor garden notebook

A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT

The River Coln contains brown trout and grayling, and is a favourite with fishermen. Rising at Brockhampton, near Cheltenham, it joins the Thames at Lechlade. Water from the Coln supplies Ablington and the neighbouring village, Bibury, where there is a trout farm dating from 1906, founded by the naturalist Arthur Severn.



TAKE THE EDGE OFF

Here, curves beat straight lines. One of the features at Ablington are the serpentine edges where the borders meet the lawns. 'People often ask why I don't have straight lines,' says Robert, 'and I tell them that nature doesn't grow in straight lines.'

Garden challenges

LIGHT: The steep sloping woodland on the south side of the river means the sun does not come over the trees until June, making half the garden a frost pocket in winter. Specimens like *Hydrangea aspera* Villosa Group grow in sheltered spots.

ALSO IN THE AREA

If you are in the area, the Coopers recommend the following places:

- **GARDEN Oxleaze Farm** Robert has high praise for this country garden, which reflects the landscape around it. Lechlade, Glos GL7 3RB. Tel: +44 (0)1367 850216.
- **NURSERY Miserden Nursery** A traditional family nursery run by David Robb who stocks a range of perennials and shrubs. Miserden, Stroud, Glos GL6 7JA. Tel: +44 (0)1285 821638. www.miserdennursery.co.uk
- **PLACE TO STAY The New Inn at Coln St Aldwyns** B&B and a sophisticated take on the traditional Cotswold pub. Pop-up pizza evening on Wednesdays. Coln St Aldwyns, Cirencester, Glos GL7 5AN. Tel: +44 (0)1285 750651. www.new-inn.co.uk



DEER ME

The lifelike bronze sculpture of a roe deer, which gazes out across the river from beneath the trees, is by the sculptor Hamish Mackie (www.hamishmackie.com).

Robert and Prue's gardening tips

- **Grow what you know** and what likes your soil. There are several things that are really impossible to kill in our garden, and they include hostas, persicarias, alchemilla and snowdrops.
- **Plant tulips in the rough.** We have started planting the tulips we lift from the borders each year in the rough grass on the south side of the river. If you want them to naturalise, you have to plant them really deep - 25cm down if you can. Don't worry about colour-co-ordinating them - they look better if the effect is of a spangled carpet, as if someone has emptied out a packet of boiled sweets.
- **Think carefully before making a wildflower meadow.** The romantic image belies the work involved! And it is important to prepare the ground properly. For advice and seed mixtures, try Cotswold Seeds - www.cotswoldseeds.com



IMAGE/HUGO RITT-SON-THOMAS

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The rill of the nepeta walk at Shepherd House was inspired by the Alhambra in Spain. Beyond, the lower pond features a sculpture by Gerard Laing. Roses 'Bobbie James', 'Wedding Day' and 'Seagull' grow on the arches.



The look OF LOVE

Shepherd House garden has been created over more than 50 years
by a dedicated couple who complement each other's talents →

PHOTOGRAPHS RAY COX | **WORDS** AILEEN SCOLAR

RIGHT *Rosa*
'Climbing
Madame
Caroline Testout'.

BELOW The courtyard was the first area designed by Sir Charles and Lady Ann Fraser in 1985. It was redesigned as the Millennium Garden in 2000, with herringbone brick paths recycled from the old byre at the bottom of the garden. The colour-themed beds contain herbs and old-fashioned perennials, with irises, poppies and tulips in spring and early summer.

For the green-fingered, describing a garden as 'romantic' usually defines the planting. Loose, blowsy, often smothered in scent; a style where the edges and boundaries are artfully smudged or elegantly blurred.

The garden at Shepherd House, a 17th-century family home in the idyllic village of Inveresk near Edinburgh, fits that description perfectly - there are roses everywhere, from the robust rambler *Rosa* 'Wedding Day' on the arches over the rill to the apricot blooms of 'Ghislaine de Féligonde' in the planters by the house. There are also clouds of *Nepeta* 'Six Hills Giant' on either side of the rill, stagey delphiniums in shades of lilac and blue, and Cedric Morris irises in a palette of paintbox pastels.

But it is also a romantic garden in the true sense of the word, because it has been created by a couple who clearly adore each other - Sir Charles and Lady Ann Fraser.

Over the years, tokens of their love have been stitched into this dreamy one-acre space, and these items now bookmark various chapters in the garden's history: the pebble mosaics commissioned by Charles for Ann's



70th birthday; the topiary sheep grazing within the dry stone 'fank' (an old Scottish word for a sheep pen), which was a gift for Charles from Ann; and the borrowed inspiration they have bestowed on the plot from their garden tours together.

The Frasers have lived at Shepherd House since 1957, when they moved in as a newly married couple. The 'wreck' of a garden they acquired was south-east facing and triangular in shape, with a large sycamore and a cluster of apple trees, one of which still survives today. The garden did hard labour as a cricket green, a football pitch and a croquet lawn as their four sons grew up, and it was only from the early



1980s that they started to transform the layout and planting. In those early days, they planted an army of trees - many of which have gone, sacrificed to the weather, the passing of time, or to Charles' and Ann's critical eye.

'The trees we planted looked terrific for a while,' says Charles. 'But they became far too large. The wellingtonia [*Sequoiadendron giganteum* or giant redwood] finally came down about 10 years ago. It's amusing to think that we've outlived the trees we planted.'

Walking around the garden with the couple today, it's fascinating to see how each inhabits their distinct role. Charles is practical and pragmatic, taking charge of the topiary, the plant propagation, the compost-making (essential to enrich this light, free-draining soil), and the patient training of an espaliered *Malus x robusta* 'Red Sentinel' that guards the alpine wall. →



ABOVE The left-hand border started out as a rose border, with an arbour covered in pink roses, but gradually other plants crept in.

FAR LEFT The Shell House ceiling was painted by the artist Lachlan Stewart and his daughter Stella.

LEFT Katie, one of the couple's two rough-haired dachshunds.





The herb parterre
was built in
1997, and uses
box hedging -
lovingly trimmed
and tended
by Charles -
interplanted with
santolina, rue
and lavender.

It is a romantic garden in the true sense of the word, because it has been created by a couple who clearly adore each other





ABOVE The herbaceous island border contains a spectrum of pinks, purples and blues, with a planting palette that favours geranium, allium, campanula, delphinium and Oriental poppy.

RIGHT Charles takes care of the topiary and tasks like compost and propagating, while Ann concentrates on the planting and structures.

→ Ann, a successful botanical artist, approaches the planting with a painter's eye, choosing plants she wants to paint, and creating harmonious colour schemes year after year. Smoky blue *Iris* 'Jane Phillips' and salmon-pink *Papaver orientale* 'Cedric Morris' are one such combination; *Erysimum* 'Bowles's Mauve' and raspberry-red opium poppies another. 'I choose most of the plants,' admits Ann. 'I like loose, blowsy planting - nothing too regimented.'

And where Charles is content to share his neat utility area and his impressive compost heaps with a clutch of white silkie bantam chickens, under the watchful eye of his equally elegant white doves, it is Ann who has dreamed up many of the garden's structural features. These include a series of obelisks, arches and arbours, all painted in a soft grey-blue, and the storybook-perfect Shell House, tucked neatly behind a tall yew hedge against the beautifully restored garden wall.

What is less often remarked upon at Shepherd House is the garden's keen



sense of humour - an attribute that helps keeps romance alive, and one that is highly prized by Charles and Ann. The quirky topiary animals, the engraved puns on tablets of slate, and the variegated ground elder nestling within a scallop shell of stone - not considered much of a treasure by most gardeners - all make visitors smile.

'If something in the garden is a success, I claim it as mine,' laughs Charles. 'If it's a failure, I blame Ann!' Not even the harshest critic could find much to fault in the garden's current

guise, yet even now it continues to change. 'We never started with a grand plan; the whole garden evolved naturally,' says Ann. 'We did it one bit at a time, and our gardening mantra has always been: the process is the purpose,' adds Charles. 'It's not the finished article that matters. It would be tragic if it was.'

Up until a few years ago, Ann and Charles maintained the garden entirely unaided; these days, they have help from local gardener Pauline Mitchell two mornings a week. Both are adamant that what gardens need is love, rather than an unlimited budget. 'Gardening isn't about spending millions - it's about investing time and passion,' says Charles. Happily, passion - and indeed love - has never been in short supply at Shepherd House.

Shepherd House garden, Crookston Road, Inveresk, Midlothian EH21 7TH. Open at various times throughout the year, including for Scotland's Gardens. Find details of 2016 opening times soon at www.shepherdhousegarden.co.uk

Shepherd House garden notebook



STORYTELLING IN SHELLS

A childhood dream of Ann's, the Shell House was completed last year. Inside, Ann painted the story of the couple's family history, using a strawberry motif, which is the symbol of the Fraser clan. She also designed the stained glass windows, and created the allium pattern on the rear wall.

Garden challenges

TRICKY SHAPE: Shepherd House garden is triangular, with no obvious central axis. The Frasers' solution was to reinstate an old path (now occupied by the rill) and create focal points at either end. Ann then designed a large herbaceous island border to make the garden feel 'less lopsided', as she puts it.



PAINTED BEAUTIES

One of Ann's favourite flowers is the iris, and she frequently paints the varieties in her garden, from early flowering *Iris unguicularis* and delicate *Iris germanica* var. *florentina* to more flamboyant bearded irises, such as 'Superstition' and 'Blue Rhythm'. Her next exhibition - to celebrate her 80th birthday - is at London's Rountree Tryon Galleries on 10-20 May 2016.

SET IN STONE

The sheep 'fank' - an old Scottish word for a sheep pen - was created by master stonemason Nigel Bialy (www.drystonedesigns.co.uk) and has been positioned to act as a screen between the formal part of the garden, and the mini wildflower meadow behind. The area it sits on was previously a pond.



Ann's 'timeless garden' tips

- **Plant plenty of trees** and don't be afraid of chopping them down if they grow too large. Our trees currently include a *Davidia involucrata*, a *Liriodendron tulipifera* and a Japanese pagoda tree (*Styphnolobium japonicum*).
- **We're rather shameless about borrowing ideas** from brilliant gardens. Our inspirations include Crathes Castle, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Little Sparta and Rosemary Verey's Barnsley House.
- **Different parts of the garden can be reinvented** as your needs change. Our courtyard garden originally had grass, but it wasn't practical with so many garden visitors. And we now grow colourful annuals in our former vegetable potager.
- **Spend time looking, as well as gardening.** We walk around the garden a lot together.
- **We've extended the garden's seasonal interest** with snowdrops, hellebores and trilliums in spring; tulips and alliums in early summer; and perennials in high summer and early autumn. In winter, the topiary provides structure.



ALSO IN THE AREA

If you are visiting, Ann & Charles recommend:

- **GARDEN Little Sparta** The garden of the late Ian Hamilton Finlay weaves poetry, philosophy and sculpture into the landscape. Stonypath, Dunsyre, South Lanarkshire ML11 8NG. Tel: +44 (0)782 6495677. www.littlesparta.org.uk
- **NURSERY Macplants** A popular, family run business with an unusual range of homegrown herbaceous perennials, alpines and grasses, including gentians and meconopsis. 5 Boggs Holdings, Pencaitland, East Lothian EH34 5BA. Tel: +44 (0)1875 341179. www.macplants.co.uk
- **STAY Shepherd House** The Frasers' charming ochre-painted holiday cottage is available through Scottish Country Cottages, and guests staying there get to enjoy the garden. www.scottish-country-cottages.co.uk

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PRIVATE VIEW

PHOTOGRAPHS MARIANNE MAJERUS | WORDS VERONICA PEERLESS

Designer Claire Mee has given this small, smart London garden a contemporary Mediterranean look, which can be enjoyed all year-round



When designer Claire Mee first set eyes on this London garden, it was 'dank and dreary, like an overgrown Victorian shrubbery.' Now, it is a modern space with a Mediterranean feel, in accordance with the owners' wishes.

The garden was redeveloped at the same time as the flat it belongs to, and the 17m x 11m space needed to work hard. 'Many London homes - like this one - have large glass doors that frame the garden and open directly onto it, so it needs to look good all year round,' says Claire. In this case, the garden also needed to look equally good from the other end, where a new garden room was being built. →



◀ LET THERE BE LIGHT

The lighting was designed by Mark Tavener, the architect who worked on the flat and garden room (www.attol.co.uk). The bed is edged by myrtle, *Myrtus communis*. Myrtle is one of Claire's favourite plants (*M. communis* subsp. *tarentina* is also used). It is on the tender side, but thrives in London gardens. 'It is evergreen with white flowers and purple berries, smells gorgeous, is very neat, and has beautiful bark as it ages.'

The clients wanted an evergreen, low-maintenance garden with a Mediterranean feel. Scent was important too

→ Lots of clearing and digging was needed before the garden could take shape - it had 'terrible' London clay that would not have suited many of the plants used. French drains (trenches filled with gravel) were put in to increase drainage, and the soil was improved with lots of gravel, sharp sand and topsoil. Several huge trees were removed (with permission, as this is a conservation area), and five pleached hornbeams were used down one side of the garden to create privacy (in London, planning rules dictate that walls and fences can be no higher than 2m, but this does not apply to plants).

The garden is laid out in a series of rectangles, reflecting the design of the extension to the flat and the garden room. It has two seating areas - one outside the house, and the other in front of the garden room. The terrace near the house is six-sided sawn contemporary grey stone, which ties in well with the London brick of the walls, while the

area outside the garden room is decked with ipe hardwood, which is long lasting and ages beautifully. The two areas are joined by a path made of the same stone as the terrace; there is no lawn, but blocks of planting throughout.

The clients wanted an evergreen, low-maintenance garden with a Mediterranean feel, as they spend a lot of time in the south of France. It would also need to look good in spring and autumn, as this is when they are around to enjoy it. Scent was important too. Therefore the garden has a 'grove' of nine olive trees, hedges of myrtle, and a fig.

The planting scheme is predominantly green, white and lime and includes aquilegias, astrantia, tulips, foxgloves, euphorbia, fennel, white hydrangeas, white agapanthus, Japanese anemones and a hedge of scented, white *Trachelospermum jasminoides*. The clients are 'thrilled' with the finished result. 'It works perfectly,' says Claire.





▲ SCULPTURAL SEATING

The furniture is Obelisk by Dedon. The four chairs and cocktail table stack together to form a free-standing sculpture (www.dedon.de). Five pleached hornbeams give privacy. The seating area outside the garden room is decked with ipe, a hardwood chosen for its longevity and good looks. Claire always uses flat - not ridged - decking for a cleaner look.

▼ ONLY CONNECT

The path connects the two seating areas. It is made from the same grey stone as the seating area near the house. River-washed pebbles soften the look and add interesting detail. The path is lined with steel edging to stop the pebbles spilling into the nearby beds. →

◀ ROOM WITH A VIEW

The timber-clad garden room at the end of the garden reflects the style of the house. The olives are underplanted with box balls, *Anemranthe lessoniana*, *Euphorbia characias* subsp. *wulfenii*, *Tellima grandiflora*, *Campanula lactiflora* 'White Pouffe', *Anemone x hybrida* 'Honorine Jobert' and *Gaura lindheimeri*. Bulbs include *Allium stipitatum* 'Mount Everest' and white muscari.





▲ LOOKING OUT

Claire points out that many London homes have large glass doors framing the garden and opening directly onto it. Therefore the garden has to look good all year round. The seating areas are used at different times - the terrace gets the morning rays and the decked area enjoys the evening sun.

Large glass doors frame the garden, and open onto it, so the garden has to look good year-round

► SITTING PRETTY

Claire treats city gardens as outdoor rooms, which need to be furnished not just with plants but comfortable, accessible and usable furniture (e.g. cushions with waterproof outdoor fabrics). The outdoor seating on the terrace is the modular Cloud range from Gloster (www.gloster.com).





◀ GORGEOUS GROVE

The 'olive grove' contains nine trees. Olives are another of Claire's favourite plants. She explains that in Italy, they are clipped, but not too tightly, so as to let a small bird such as a wren fly through it - this gives the tree some movement. Claire thinks that olives look especially good during the winter months, when the leaves look silver and sparkling. The owners' sculpture can be glimpsed through the trees.

▶ GREEN DREAM

In a bed near the house, a fig tree is underplanted with green, white and lime-green plants including *Origanum vulgare* 'Aureum', *Hebe rakaiensis*, *Euphorbia amygdaloides* var. *robbiae*, *Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Goldschleier', *Myrtus communis* and *Lychnis coronaria* 'Alba', plus *Narcissus* 'Thalia', and tulips 'White Triumphator' and 'Spring Green'.



DESIGNER PROFILE



CLAIRE MEE worked in the fashion industry until 1992, then sold her business and took up gardening. She trained in horticulture at Norwood Hall, the old Middlesex agricultural college. She now works with fellow designer Fiona O'Neill, who hand draws all the garden plans. They design together, and work very closely with their clients to achieve a garden that works for them and will get better with every year. 'We try not to follow fashion, as the garden must not age or date - only improve.' The pair won Best in Show at the Urban Garden Show at Olympia, London, 11 years ago. 'We don't do garden shows now,' Claire explains. 'We concentrate on our clients.' www.clairemee.co.uk

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SCREEN ICONS

Garden designer **Ruth Willmott** suggests three ways to 'grow your own' privacy using plants and trees



STRATEGIC TREES

Avoid 'perimeter' planting of evergreens by strategically placing an evergreen tree on a boundary and mixing this with deciduous trees. This allows dappled light in your garden, yet still screens for privacy or blocks a specific unwanted view. Columnar evergreen trees such as yew, cypress, juniper or cedar can all create a dramatic structural planting scheme, screen year round, and contrast well with trees with light and airy foliage such as birch, rowan, amelanchier, maple, cherry or apple, giving a gentler screening solution. Semi-mature trees can be planted small or, for instant screening impact, at very large sizes.



EPHEMERAL SCREENS

Tall ornamental grasses and perennials can create ephemeral screens in the summer months, when you use the garden more. In my RHS Chelsea Flower Show garden this year (*above*), we used digitalis, angelica, *Ammi majus*, linaria, hesperis and the grass *Calamagrostis brachytricha* to create a tall, soft, airy planting screen between the white-stemmed jacquemontii birch trees.

There are so many ornamental grasses and annuals to choose from, which can provide screening at various heights. Miscanthus is available in many different heights, with grasses flowering in summer through to winter coverage if the faded flowerheads are not cut down.



GREEN DIVISION

Using plants as green walls, which divide or create green rooms, is a way to improve privacy or screen, like in Marcus Barnett's *Telegraph* garden at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show (*above*). Hedges can be kept formally clipped or left naturally loose. Clipped hedges are like walls, and require more maintenance to keep tidy. Picking the right hedging plant for the ultimate size and scale of your garden and screening use is important, and there are lots of hedging choices to reach different mature sizes. Be creative beyond straight-cut hedges; consider organic, cloud-pruned, wavy or curved, and set them out in staggered rather than straight lines.

To find out more Ruth's work, visit www.ruthwillmott.com

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Flower Pod Southwell is a community project based in Nottinghamshire which helps its clients through horticulture. The garden they have created supplies blooms for a cut-flower enterprise and confetti-making initiative.

Dare, dream & THINK BIG

Last year, we launched The English Garden Future Fund, offering up to £5,000 to help a gardening project in the UK. The winner was Flower Pod, a social enterprise helping adults with learning disabilities through gardening. Project leader Anna Joyce explains the difference the funding has made, and encourages people to apply for the 2016 bursary →

PHOTOGRAPHS JOHN CAMPBELL

**RIGHT,
CLOCKWISE
FROM TOP LEFT**

Anna Joyce, who applied for the Future Fund for Flower Pod Southwell; clients Helen Harding and Phillip Cree pot up plants for the garden; Susan Walker prepares flowers for drying; Helen Harding shows off a bouquet cut from flowers in the garden, which are for a wedding.

BELOW The Future Fund money has helped Flower Pod expand into confetti making.



When I heard that we had been shortlisted in the final three, we were all thrilled

Winning The English Garden Future Fund award has been a tremendous opportunity for the team at Flower Pod, but also an experience that we will never forget. Thank you to everyone who voted and supported us from the bottom of our hearts.

When I first noticed the Future Fund application in the magazine last year, I thought our little social enterprise wouldn't stand a chance. But as it turns out, sometimes one can think too parochially, and this was a near miss. The mantra we must always remember at these times is: 'Think big!'

We enjoyed every aspect of the Future Fund. The application process was easy, and our confetti-making project fitted perfectly into the amount being offered - £5,000. As always, we involved all our clients with learning disabilities from the start. We have to be careful not to build expectations, so we had a relaxed approach to this, and took the opportunity to research the costs involved in the project, to get everybody to understand the implications of taking on such an exciting idea.

When I heard that we had been shortlisted in the final three, we were all thrilled, as you can imagine. But on seeing the other finalists, and knowing that the outcome would be determined by a public vote online, we became a little downhearted. One of our opponents was a national treasure: the Battersea Dogs and Cats Home.





We felt we couldn't compete. But there is nothing like a challenge to galvanise a group of determined people!

The English Garden Future Fund was the springboard we needed. A feature on all three shortlisted projects was published in *The English Garden*, explaining the work that we do at Flower Pod and our hopes for the funding we had applied for. This national exposure was the start of our marketing campaign. We contacted supporters through a variety of means: local press, local radio and social media. This gave us a great excuse to tell as many people as possible about Flower Pod. Even if we had not won, we would have still gained enormously for the project.

We were the 'underdogs', and people seemed to realise this. A colleague's friend of a friend is a vicar in Kent, and she asked her congregation to get out their phones and guided them through the online voting process. And one client's granny, on a trip to Skegness, helped her day-tripper friends and the coach driver to vote. The ripples went far and wide, to our advantage.

When the editor Stephanie called after voting closed, I was sure she was phoning to commiserate. I was so surprised that we had won I couldn't believe it at first, and asked if she was joking! It seems we touched people with our story and our ideas, and a last-minute rush of goodwill from people all over

the country put us 100 votes ahead of the other projects.

The English Garden Future Fund has made us focus, with or without the heady heights of winning. The money has helped, of course. We are now able to achieve our dream, and can go ahead and task our clients with petal pulling and paper making, knowing that we have funding behind us. We have the chance to create a commercially viable product which is a perfect community-integrating business and an added income stream for our enterprise.

Our clients were so uplifted by this whole experience. They achieved. The opportunity to do so is rare in the life of someone with learning disabilities. →

ABOVE LEFT

Client Helen Standfield and support worker Tracey Thurlow enjoy a stroll in the garden. **ABOVE** The project centre is a progressive eco straw-bale construction.



RIGHT Support worker Charlotte Feeney Proctor and client Jade Meakin fill pots.

BELOW LEFT The garden and polytunnel are full of annual and perennial plants perfect for cutting for bouquets and drying for confetti.

BELOW RIGHT Client Laura Scall plucks petals for confetti.



→ The value of the prize money is far more than the monetary total given by that generous philanthropist who made it possible to create the Future Fund. I hope many more worthwhile projects benefit as much as we have. I would encourage anyone who thinks they might want to apply to just do it -

we never thought we would win in a million years, and look at us now!

Find out more about Flower Pod and its confetti and cut flowers at the project's new website, created with funding from The English Garden Future Fund: www.flowerpod.org

How to apply

The English Garden Future Fund will soon be welcoming applications for 2016. The bursary scheme is offering up to £5,000 for ideas, initiatives, developments, projects and campaigns that could have a wider impact in horticulture in the UK. You will find more details and an application form in our November 2015 issue, out on 14 October.

The clients themselves were so uplifted by this whole experience. They achieved



A tantalising glimpse through the new gate into a transformed garden space, with smart new fencing, tidy lawn and no mess – a far cry from the clutter that previously filled the garden



Jacksons Fencing

News, topical treats and more . . .

Clean lines and simplicity maximise the feeling of space in this town garden makeover...

I really enjoy being able to feature customer projects on the Jackson's website. It's great hearing from our customers who send me before and after photos of their projects. I am amazed at the stunning results achieved by people who are determined to transform their garden into a designer dream.

One such tale is from Carla and John Twist, their reason for sending it in, has something to do with the large part the new fencing had to play in the total transformation of their garden, of course. Here's what Carla told us:

Having bought our first house together we wanted to turn it into our own little paradise. Not an easy mission considering how neglected it all was. The garden was worst of all. Now it's finished and we can enjoy our outdoor space. I still find myself smiling at how pretty and light the garden looks. The Hit and Miss Horizontal fence panels we chose play a massive role in extending the garden, and being so attractive the fence never feels like a barrier, but more of a beautiful feature to admire instead. I know it will all mature gracefully together. The fence sparked great feedback from the landscapers and lots of interest from the neighbours as well.

What a transformation, it's all beautifully simple, with a lovely minimalist feel and good clean lines, which makes the most of the space – well done John and Carla!

It has actually opened my eyes to how attractive our Hit and Miss fence panels are. I love the way the sunlight shines through them, illuminating the panels and creating shadowy stripes.

Something this story reminds me of is that Hit and Miss panels, are ones that we at

Jacksons refer to as 'good both sides'. If you look at the photo of the garden through the gate, you can see what we mean – because of how the panels are made, there are no unsightly rails running across them on either side. This means that both you and your neighbour get the pretty side of the fence – you can find out more about these and other 'good both sides' panels, and see more of Carla's and other customer's projects by going to your dedicated page: www.jacksons-fencing.co.uk/lifestyle – or for info on any of Jacksons products or brochures please call **0800 408 4733** to talk to your local Jacksons Fencing Centre.

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CHANGE OF SEASON

October brings with it new colours and plenty of gardening tasks for **Tamsin Westhorpe** as she shares the garden at Stockton Bury in Herefordshire

PHOTOGRAPHS JOHN CAMPBELL

October marks the end of our open season, and sees the end of lovely plant chats with visitors for another year. This year, we will remain open on Thursday 1 October in aid of the British Red Cross as part of its Just One More Day campaign - so we'll have an extra few hours of companionship before we shut the gates.

This is the month when we start the mammoth task of cutting back borders and climbers, and start to put away outdoor furniture and cover up our garden features. It marks the start of serious work. Agapanthus, euphorbias, perennial diascias and melianthus are just some of the plants we don't cut

back, to assist them through winter. So before you take your shears to the border, it is worth noting plants that need to be kept shaggy over winter.

The cider orchards that surround the garden are being harvested, and there is a distinct smell of cider in the garden. The lawn is littered with chestnuts, crab apples and golden leaves. Squirrels are busy burying their harvests of conkers in our pots, and the robin is a constant companion as I work. There is still plenty in flower, with kniphofias and alstroemeria joining a colourful show of autumn leaves and fruits. The tree that deserves a mention is the tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) on the main lawn. It was planted when I was a young girl, so I feel we have grown up together. →

ABOVE Tamsin gets a helping hand from editor Stephanie as she prunes an actinidia.

JOBS THIS MONTH

BELOW The blades of the mower are raised to make the final cut of the year, and then the mower will be sent off for a service.

Chop chop

The lawn is a priority for me now. Opening in April did not give us time to sow seed or improve areas of turf that have high traffic in spring. Therefore, this is the month to take action, and either sow seed or turf. The lawn will have its final cut this month, but the blades are raised on the mower.

As I cut back perennials, I make note of those that need to be moved, divided or reduced. Now is also the time to lift and move the bulbs for the species *Tulipa sprengeri*. Last year, I had great success lifting and dividing very mature clumps of alliums. They had risen out of the soil, and with a little investigation I discovered that the bulbs were stacked on top of each other. I gently separated them, and the result was lots more plants for free this summer.

My chosen tools for chopping back perennials are secateurs and hedging shears. I am guaranteed to lose at least two pairs of secateurs in the garden each winter, so those with brightly coloured handles are my preference. Perennials that are fully hardy are cut right back, as leaving an inch of stem serves no purpose. It will take months to cut this four-acre garden back, so we simply start at one end and carry on through.

This is also the perfect time to plant hedges, trees and shrubs, so preparing new ground is essential if this is your plan for winter. You'll be able to find reasonably priced bare-root plants at nurseries now.



Beneficial insects

Take a few minutes to provide overwintering places for beneficial insects such as ladybirds.

This is especially important if you cut back your borders now. Make bundles out of the hollow stems from perennials, and place them in an out-of-the-way corner in a sunny spot. Ladybirds will feast on aphids in summer, so should be made welcome in your garden over winter. This is a good project for children over the half-term break.



REMEMBER TO...

Cover your urns, pots and garden art that are at risk from frost damage. It is worth protecting them with fleece or similar. Bring empty pots undercover if you have the storage space. →





IN SEASON

GOLDEN GIFTS

The weather may be getting colder, but the colours offered by the garden are warm and inviting.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Our *Liriodendron tulipifera* (the tulip tree) is now about 30 years old. It is large tree, but has plenty of room to grow on the main lawn at Stockton Bury; few climbers can beat the autumn colour provided by Virginia creeper, *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*; sweet chestnuts are found in the Dingle garden; the leaves of *Cornus* 'Eddie's White Wonder' will turn from gold to red before falling; *Mahonia japonica* looks dashing in its red coat; *Malus x zumi* 'Golden Hornet' often holds its fruit for longer than its leaves into winter; *Euonymus alatus* contrasts well with the trunk of a silver birch; *Cotoneaster lacteus* is popular with the birds for its plentiful berries.





TOP TASKS

Autumn in the greenhouse

The fuchsias that have enjoyed a long and showy summer in our unheated greenhouse have been put in our cellar for winter. They will remain there until late March, along with the begonias and later the dahlias.

The greenhouse is then given a thorough clean. The floor is swept and pressure-washed, and then the glass is cleaned. It is a very rewarding task for a wet day, and so worthwhile. This autumn clean will dramatically reduce the risk of pests and diseases over winter.

Any plants that need a little winter heat are moved from here into the polytunnel, which is kept just frost free. It is tempting - and sometimes necessary - to use your greenhouse as a store for pots and compost. If you can avoid this, do - but if not, wash pots out well, and keep the space organised and ready for spring.

LEFT It is the perfect time to clean out the greenhouse, before winter arrives.

PROPAGATION STATION *Hardwood cuttings*

BELOW *Rosa x odorata* 'Mutabilis' flowers for months, so is a great choice for propagating.

Hardwood cuttings can be taken any time from now until early spring. It is a suitable propagation method for deciduous shrubs such as buddlejas, cornus, roses, gooseberries and blackcurrants. They take time to root, but you don't need an undercover area for success.

1 Using a pair of secateurs, look for healthy shoots that have grown in the current year. Here I am removing shoots from *Rosa x odorata* 'Mutabilis'.

2 Choose shoots that are of pencil thickness and about 12cm long. Cut above a bud at the top with a cut that slopes away from the bud. It is important that cuttings are inserted into the soil or compost the right way up.

3 Insert cuttings into garden soil or compost with about half of the cutting left above ground. You should see signs of growth in late spring, but don't lift or pot on until the following autumn.



Grasses care

Cutting back & dividing

We have great success with *Carex dipsacea*. It is the perfect partner for the red species tulips that shoot up from among the gold blades in spring. This evergreen clump-forming grass offers year-round interest and reaches about 50cm. As a rule, you should not cut

back this grass in winter, as it can be tender. But I have cut some back this year to divide them. Plants will be potted up and grown on for replanting in spring. To create yet more plants, I potted on seedlings I found seeded in the gravel path in July. →

RIGHT Some ornamental grasses require cutting back now, while others don't. To find out more about growing and buying grasses, visit the experts at Knoll Gardens in Dorset.



LEFT The Paddock garden is waiting to be cut back. Leaving areas of garden uncut until spring allows birds to feed and insects to overwinter. The foliage on the trees, including fothergilla (left) and acer (right), are changing colour now to golden and fiery hues.

PROTECTING PLANTS

BELOW The shading comes off now. If your polytunnel needs a replacement cover, act now. They tend to last about five years. There are different types of covers, so investigate. **RIGHT** Eucomis and other plants are kept in the polytunnel over winter.

The polytunnel has now had the shading removed for winter. It has become a home for tender plants that we want to bring through winter. We warm the space with an oil heater, so we are able to set the thermostat to keep the space from just above freezing.

Although there is some debate as to their hardiness, we store our potted eucomis in here (they will overwinter outside in some sheltered gardens if planted deep in a sunny spot). The climbing alstroemeria (boehmeria) is also kept in here. As with the eucomis, it can survive outside, but potted specimens are best kept frost free.

On fine days, we still throw the doors wide open to ventilate the polytunnel. The amount of water we give plants that are going dormant is now reduced.



On fine days, we still throw the doors wide open to ventilate the polytunnel

Time for pruning



Autumn and winter are good times to remove dead and damaged wood and control those shrubs that have gone mad. It is not a time of wild abandon, when you run amok with the pruning saw, however. Get carried away, and you'll lose out on flowers and fruit, and you might leave more tender plants open to frost damage.

Invasive climbers such as ivy (*left*) need to be kept in check, or they will make their way up to the rafters. But it is important that each shrub is treated individually. Those that are in good shape and working in their space may require pruning at a different time to encourage maximum flowers and fruit next year.

Early flowering shrubs usually flower on the previous year's growth, so need pruning immediately after flowering. An example of this is the wonderfully scented philadelphus, which fills the garden with perfume in early July.

Later summer-flowering shrubs tend to flower at the end of the current season's growth. Wait to prune these in early spring, and they will have plenty of time to put on new growth to carry the flowers in mid- to late summer. These shrubs may not respond well to being pruned in winter, as this will encourage new shoots that might well get frosted. I recommend that you read up about the individual shrubs before taking action. ♦

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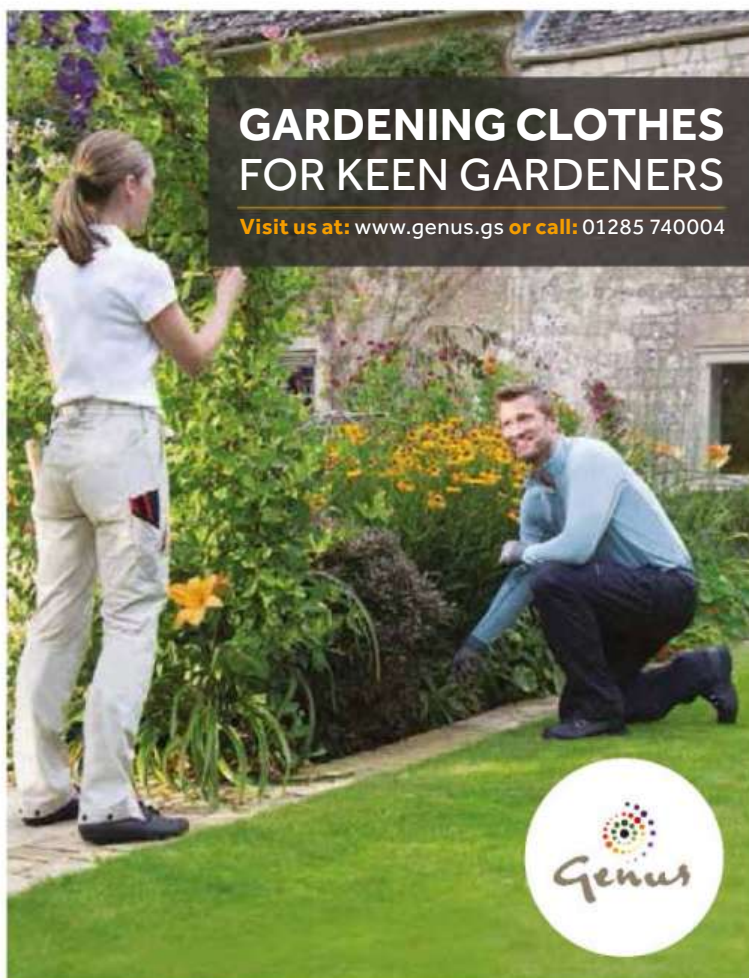
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Park life

Wayne Sedgwick works for Cheltenham Borough Council, where he ensures the safety of the public, wildlife and conservation areas

I grew up in Dover in Kent, where there weren't many job options besides working for the port. I wanted to join the Royal Marines as a commando when I was 16, but I wasn't successful. I went to work for HM Customs and Excise, then on the ferries as a silver service waiter, before moving to a camping company in France. I wanted to try lots of things.

When I came back, I decided to do a sports therapy massage course as a mature student. My lecturer told me I was more academic than practical, so I did a degree in Geography and Leisure Event Management at the University of Gloucestershire.

After graduating, I got a summer job at Cheltenham Borough Council as an assistant gardener. Then I worked as a seasonal ranger for a couple of years, before the role became more permanent. When I first started, we were called park wardens, but there was a thing about 'parkies' that shout at young boys and kick them out of the park, so now we are now called community rangers.

I had no experience in horticulture, but learnt a lot over the years. I've gained many different qualifications, from management to chainsaw training.

I look after Leckhampton Hill, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It's 166 acres of calcareous limestone grassland which hasn't had any fertilising since the Iron Age. I have lots of volunteers; without them, it would be difficult. We concentrate on nature conservation, cutting down trees and scrub-bashing. We have 20-30 cows too because we can't use machinery where the hill is steep.

Every day is different, the job is so varied. We may be inspecting playgrounds, or litter picking, or we may get a call to say a duck is injured. Sometimes there's a lot of admin too. I also arrange events, such as the Midsummer Fiesta, which is nicely linked to my degree.

You're never going to earn a lot of money in this job, but you do it for the reaction you get back. If kids on a school trip remember the name of a butterfly or flower, that makes me happy. ♦



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'Foxtrot' is a new tulip, which impressed in the recent RHS trial at Wisley.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Experts spent this spring picking out the very best tulips - old and new - for the coveted RHS Award of Garden Merit. **Ambra Edwards** shares their findings →

PHOTOGRAPHS ANNAÏCK GUITTENY



LEFT 'Flaming Baltic' is a new cultivar, available from Bloms Bulbs.

BELOW 'Exotic Sun' has a large pale-yellow flower with fringed petals.

What makes a really outstanding tulip? That's been the conundrum testing the judges at this year's spectacular tulip trial at RHS Garden Wisley.

The trial came about following last year's dazzling display at Wisley in April and May, during which time visitors were invited to vote for their favourites among 350 varieties. The 20 that garnered the most votes were included in the trial, alongside a selection made by the RHS Bulb Committee, aiming to represent the very best tulips currently available on the market. There were 82 candidates in all, ranging from the delicate Himalayan species *T. clusiana* var. *stellata* to the flamboyant new cultivar 'Flaming Baltic' - fringed, flamed and multi-flowered in glistening white and maroon.

All the trialled bulbs were planted out on 10 November 2014 in blocks of 42, while a further eight of each bulb were planted in pots. These pots did not form part of the trial, but were displayed in Wisley's sequence of small gardens. 'What we did learn, though,' says trials officer Andrew McSeveney, 'is just how well all the tulips grew in pots: we will definitely be recommending growing them this way.'

Of the three tulips that came top in the People's Choice - 'Apricot Perfection', 'Tender Whisper' and 'Timeless' - only one, the latter, has been recommended for an Award of Garden Merit (AGM). 'In a way, that's not surprising,' says trial chairman Malcolm Bradbury. 'It's natural to be attracted to the most pleasing or unusual blooms, but it's our job to make sure they are also the most garden-worthy.'

The world leaders in tulip breeding remain - as ever - the Dutch, but their focus is largely on cut flowers. Sometimes this benefits the gardener - a wider range of colours and uniformity of bloom are as valuable in the bedding scheme as in the vase. But the gardener requires many qualities the florist does not: a decent time in bloom; dependable performance; and, not least, resistance to wind and weather.

The trial panel gave points for impact, novelty, vibrancy, colour, uniformity and elegance



RAVISHING REDS

The beauty of tulips is their vibrancy and clarity of colour - however fancy they become, nothing beats a deep red.

1 'Seadov' A truly gorgeous tulip that ticks all the boxes - a deep, clear red with a silky sheen that opens up wide to reveal a black centre. With its strong, short stem (40cm), it stands up well to wind and rain, and is an excellent choice for bedding.

2 'Red Hat' This was a favourite among the judges. 'It's just so cute,' says Teresa. 'There's something so endearing about those fuzzy little red heads.' Sturdy and uniform (50cm), it's perfect for pots or bedding, offering a mass of velvety, fringed blooms set off by almost hosta-like, grey-green foliage.

3 'Wisley' With its elegant goblet form and incredible intensity of colour, this striking new tulip looks certain to become a classic. Each shiny cup of glowing red has a star-shaped splash of gold in the bottom - a showy addition to the May garden.



So the trial panel developed an elaborate scoring system, giving points for impact and novelty, for vibrancy and appeal of colour, uniformity and elegance of form. They considered the longevity of the blooms, their resistance to pests and diseases, and their overall vigour and stance. The latest trends in tulips, explains Malcolm, are towards multiple blooms (most tulips have a single flower), fringed petals, and especially double forms with lots of petals. But heavy double blooms need stout, strong stems to hold them up, and if they fill up with rain and turn brown, they're not much use in an English garden.

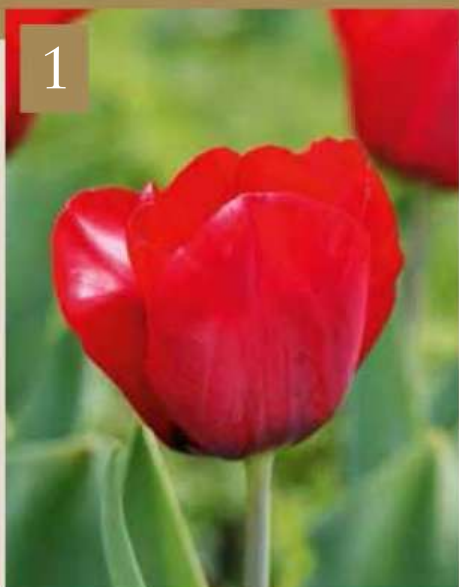
EXCITING NEW CULTIVARS

Some of the newer varieties are so elaborate, they scarcely resemble tulips at all. Late double 'Nirvana', for instance, looks more like a peony, with a huge head of frilly white petals on a short stem. Fringed tulip 'Exotic Sun' has enormous raggedly yellow blooms held wide and flat (think buttercup on steroids). 'Personally, I prefer a tulip that looks like a tulip,' confides one of the trial judges, Teresa Clements. →

ABOVE, FROM LEFT 'Helmar' is a reliable old timer that performs well; 'Nirvana' is a double tulip that flowers late; 'Belle du Monde' is another new variety, with long, stiff stems.

TULIP GROWING TIPS

- **Plant in November.** Make your hole three times the depth of the bulb, so there's twice the depth (about 10cm) above it. Tulips prefer well-drained conditions in full sun.
- **If you want uniform height,** plant fresh each year. Most growers advocate treating cultivated (not species) tulips as annuals. When the show is over, lift and dry the bulbs, perhaps replanting them elsewhere, but don't expect much - Andrew Woodall at Broughton Grange lifts and replants 5,000 bulbs a year, and fewer than 10% flower again.
- **If you don't mind them coming up higgledy-piggledy,** leave the bulbs in, adding more each year, as performance inevitably dwindles. Species bulbs reflower more reliably.
- **For great performance, grow in pots** to drop into the border as required. This also preserves tulips from squirrels and mice. But don't leave them in pots for more than a year.
- **Choose shorter, squatter tulips** in exposed conditions, avoiding heavy-headed varieties that may droop or snap.





'It's natural to be attracted to the most pleasing blooms, but it's our job to make sure they are also the most garden-worthy'

→ 'But the public absolutely love these two - I could hear people exclaiming over them while I was taking notes. And they certainly look impressive en masse.'

The RHS has reconfirmed 10 existing tulip AGMs and 24 new AGMs for tulips. Not all the winners are new introductions. **'Helmar'**, for example, has been around for nearly 20 years - a big, sturdy tulip with waxy yellow petals streaked with red. Newcomer **'Belle du Monde'** has soft-pink, ostrich-egg blooms held on long, stiff stems - a statuesque tulip ideal for an aristocratic urn. Even more subtle is **'Sanne'**, whose long, pointed, white-edged petals start pale apricot but deepen to rose.

Tulips can change dramatically in colour as they mature - none more delightfully than **'Foxtrot'**, an early, very double form that starts white and steadily flushes to crimson, setting off this spectrum of pinks with shiny, blue-grey foliage. For drama, it's hard to beat **'Vincent van Gogh'**, unfurling near-black matte petals to reveal a pale yellow stigma like a beady central eye. Pair it with orange **'Ballerina'**, and wait for the sun to shine through.

OLD FAVOURITES

Lovely lily-flowered **'Ballerina'** is one of 10 well-loved tulips in the trial to have their AGMs reconfirmed. It would look equally fine with **'Paul Scherer'** - smaller than **'Queen of Night'** but even darker, with a handsome sheen. Gloriously

coloured **'Prinses Irene'** has been lighting up our gardens since 1949 (Vita Sackville-West used it at Sissinghurst). **'Russian Princess'** combines robustness with romance.

Then there are two glorious whites that have truly earned their spurs - elegant, long-lasting **'White Triumphator'**, and late-flowering **'Angels Wish'**. 'This is an outstandingly impressive tulip,' enthuses Teresa, 'clean, disease-free, resilient - as beautiful in the garden as in a bride's bouquet. It's no wonder the visitors adored it.'

For once, we star-struck gardeners and the RHS's exacting judges are in perfect accord. ♦

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ABOVE, FROM LEFT 'Ballerina' is a lily-flowered type that goes well with dark tulips like 'Queen of Night'; 'Angels Wish' is a pure white tulip that is disease free; 'Russian Princess' is robust but looks delicate and pretty.

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Blade runner

Many gardeners know the name Karl Foerster from the grasses named after him - but who was he?

WORDS SARAH FEELEY

The notion of grass being the hair of Mother Nature came from Karl Foerster, the German plantsman, nurseryman, plant breeder and writer. His name is inextricably linked with grasses - most famously *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster'.

Born in 1874 in Berlin to an astronomer father and a painter mother, as a teenager Karl was an apprentice gardener at a castle nursery in Schwerin, Germany. He went on to study on the Italian Riviera under famous plant breeder and landscape architect Ludwig Winter, who specialised in grand estates, and created gardens with ecological integrity that slotted into the natural landscape. This made a huge impression on Karl, who developed his own style using large drifts of tall, hardy plants and gardens that flowed into the landscape.

By then, his parents owned a nursery in Berlin, and in 1903 Karl set about revamping it, selecting a limited number of plants for maximum beauty, resilience and endurance. Four years later, the first Foerster catalogue was published, and an article Karl wrote about cold-hardy Japanese chrysanthemums was published.

When the nursery moved to Potsdam, he transformed one-and-a-quarter acres of agricultural land, with great success. Rather than the traditional view of plants as colouring material to be replaced with new after



LEFT *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster' is a striking ornamental grass that's globally popular.

For Karl, each plant was an individual, and he emphasised the importance of an interplay of appearance, colour and fragrance

flowering, for Karl each plant was an individual, and he emphasised the importance of an interplay of appearance, colour and fragrance in seasonal succession.

He gave his first lecture on cold-hardy perennials in 1910, and in 1912 started to cultivate perennials for exhibitions and experiments. His breeding aimed to enhance a plant's best qualities and make it more robust without changing its essence. A few years later, he redesigned the landscape around the royal palace of Cecilienhof. He used grasses to soften the planting, and introduced perennials, grasses and ferns from around the world, including perennials that didn't need staking.

After the First World War, his book *Vom Bluetengarten der Zukunft* (*From The Blooming Garden Of The Future*) was published. He became a renowned breeder of delphiniums, producing around 70 cross-breeds and the cultivar 'Berghimmel' in 1920. Joining

forces with two landscape architects, he transformed the town of Bornim into a magnet for gardeners.

During the Nazi era, Karl employed numerous Jewish friends, and defied Nazi demands to only propagate and sell native German plants. He created show gardens throughout Germany and beyond, and in 1950 received an honorary doctorate from Humboldt University.

The same decade saw him introduce *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster'. Beautiful and useful, it's a clump-forming, deciduous, perennial grass; very low maintenance, fully hardy and fast growing. A classic of prairie schemes, with a strong vertical habit, in summer its soft, feathery, green plumes appear, maturing into stiff, wheat-coloured spikes that last into winter.

Karl died in 1970 aged 96 at his home in Bornim. Today, his garden is managed by his daughter and is part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. ♦



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BUSH CRAFT

Shrubs give so much in the garden for very little appreciation. **Andy McIndoe** chooses 10 great specimens that will make you consider them afresh

I often refer to shrubs as the backbone of the garden. They provide structure throughout the year, when more fragile annuals and perennials collapse and retreat beneath the soil in winter. However, this description does not extol their attributes as wonderful flowering and foliage plants. It does not highlight their ability to add colour, form and fragrance to a garden, with very little input from the gardener. Put aside any thoughts of shrubs as big, bony beasts that outgrow any bed or border. Open your eyes to the most adaptable plants, which you can rely upon to perform through the seasons, year after year.

1 [↑] *Syringa* 'Red Pixie'

An upright and compact lilac, ideal for the smallest garden, growing to 1.2m. Unlike larger syringas, it is an attractive shrub when not in bloom, with small, soft-green leaves. The tiny, fragrant flowers appear in conical flowerheads in late spring, red-purple in bud, opening to lilac-mauve; sweetly fragrant and profuse. Can be lightly pruned after flowering, but this is not essential. An excellent flowering shrub for a mixed border, or to add height and structure to perennial planting. →



2 ←

Cistus x purpureus 'Alan Fradd'

The large tissue-paper blooms of this sun rose are pure white, blotched with deep crimson at the base of the petals, which surround golden-yellow stamens. They appear over a long period through midsummer. With dark stems and narrow, wavy leaves, *Cistus x purpureus* is taller and more upright than many varieties, growing to 90cm with a similar spread. It is perfect for a dry, sunny border with lavenders, helianthemums and silver foliage shrubs. It is also lovely against the red-purple foliage of *Berberis thunbergii* f. *atropurpurea* 'Rose Glow'.

3 →

Calycanthus x raulstonii
'Hartlage Wine'

This hybrid sweetshrub is an exotic beauty with large, shining green leaves, turning rich gold in autumn. Magnolia-like blossoms of rich burgundy-maroon with incurved petals, tipped with cream towards the centres, are carried in the leaf axils even on young plants. Flowering from late spring through midsummer, it has a delicate but appealing fragrance. Eventually a large shrub growing to 1.8m or more, its size and spread can be controlled by careful pruning after flowering. Lovely planted with *Physocarpus opulifolius* Diabole D'Or (see page 88). Also sold as X *Sinocalycanthus raulstonii* 'Hartlage Wine'.



4 ←

Pittosporum tenuifolium
'Irene Paterson'

A light and lively evergreen with small, wavy, pale-green leaves, heavily suffused with white, carried on fine dark stems. The new shoot tips are often pure white; the growth is bushy but never dense. It is slow growing in habit and reasonably compact, reaching 1.5m high and 1.2m wide, so it is the ideal choice for a small garden. Plant it against dark evergreens or with a white-flowered cistus or potentilla. Excellent for cutting for floral decoration in any season.

5 → *Cornus alternifolia* 'Argentea'

The variegated pagoda dogwood is a beautiful shrub of light, airy character growing to 1.5m x 1.2m. The layered branches carry small green leaves broadly edged with white. Clusters of white flowers along the tops of the branches in late spring add to the shrub's frothy character. No pruning is required. It is a much better choice than the larger-growing *Cornus controversa* 'Variegata' for smaller gardens. Essential in any green-and-white planting scheme, and lovely near water.



6 ← *Viburnum plicatum* 'Rotundifolium'

Anyone who likes *Viburnum plicatum* 'Mariesii' will love 'Rotundifolium'. With horizontal but slightly ascending branches up to 1.5m, it has a similar, layered habit. In spring, the flower clusters are carried all along the branches. Soft, pale green at first, they become cream, expand and turn white, then blush pink. The effect is stunning, extravagant and beautiful. The round leaves are attractively pleated. Grow it as a specimen where it has room to spread, ideally underplanted with hederia or pachysandra.

7 → *Buddleja* 'Miss Ruby'

Buddlejas may get bad press, but few other plants produce such a rich display in midsummer. 'Miss Ruby' is more compact than seedling buddlejas, growing to 1.5m with a similar spread. Deep-green leaves are the backdrop for rich-magenta flowers in large panicles. The fragrance is strong and sweet, attracting masses of bees and butterflies. Deadhead regularly to prolong the flowering season; hard prune in late winter. Plant with *Sambucus* 'Black Lace' or *Cotinus coggygria* 'Royal Purple' for an opulent combination. →





8 ← *Physocarpus opulifolius* Diabole d'Or

One of the best dark-leaved foliage shrubs, with arching stems of deep copper leaves, orange towards the tips of the shoots. Clusters of pinkish flowers in early summer develop to jewel-like ruby fruits by late summer. Cut out some of the old stems in winter, and leave the light-brown new branches to grow and arch gracefully, making a shrub of 1.5m in height and spread. Excellent for cutting for floral decoration and a wonderful planting partner for orange shrub roses.

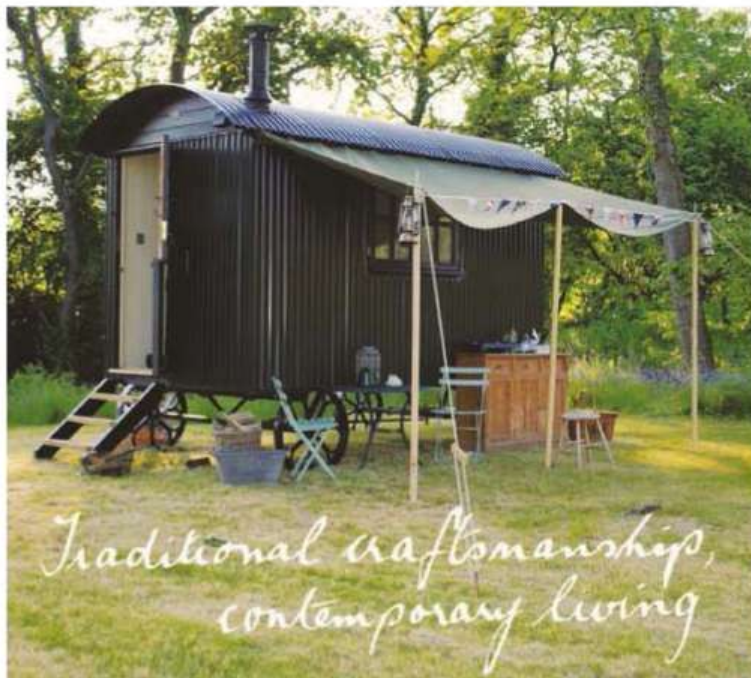
9 → *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Invincibelle Spirit'

If you like *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle', but hate its floppy character, you will love 'Invincibelle Spirit'. Light, upright stems up to 75cm carry soft-green, velvet leaves and loose heads of starry strawberry-pink florets in late summer. The colour is subtle and sophisticated, and mixes well with blue-flowering perennials such as nepeta and salvias, or with lavender. Like 'Annabelle', 'Invincibelle Spirit' also grows well in shade. Cut back to 15cm in late winter.



10 ← *Choisya x dewitteana* White Dazzler

A smaller, more compact evergreen than most varieties of Mexican orange, growing to 1.2m in height and spread. It has small, dark-green leaves with narrow leaflets, and clusters of starry white flowers in spring and again in autumn. This is the perfect shrub for the small garden or a pot: all-year appeal and looks, and suitable for sun or shade. Partner it with *Cornus alternifolia* 'Argentea' and *Euonymus fortunei* 'Emerald Gaiety' for a classic green-and-white planting scheme with year-round appeal. ♦



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BEAUTY QUEENS

Rose breeder **Philip Harkness** selects three easy-to-grow roses to plant this autumn, which will add colour and scent to the garden



Rosa
Chandos Beauty

A modern hybrid tea bush rose that is becoming a favourite all around Europe. Possessing the classic hybrid tea flower form that we remember with affection from our grandmothers' gardens, Chandos Beauty beguiles us with a perfume that is strong, pure rose. The sweet fragrance makes me smile. With light blush and apricot shades in the bloom, and a strong, healthy, dark-green leaf, this is perfection in a rose bush.



Rosa
The Simple Life

It is rare to have so much from one plant. A repeat-flowering climber, The Simple Life gives bloom between June and November. The flowers are simplicity and beauty - just five delightful soft-pink petals in big, long-lasting clusters. Large orange hips appear in autumn after the late-season flowers, and the dark-green leaves resist disease and stay on the plant until deep into winter. This is a climber that is truly worth a space on any wall or fence.



Rosa Virginia
Mckenna OBE

A shrub rose that is a veritable treasure trove of horticultural delight, Virginia Mckenna OBE is a compact plant bearing a profusion of rosette-shaped blooms, in soft cream with some pink in the early stages. It has a dark-green leaf which is renowned for its health and a supreme contrast to the flower shade. Then there is the perfume - a rich citronella delight. When the flower is half to three-quarters open, it is overpoweringly strong. Easy to grow, beautiful and rewarding.

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WILD AT heart

Forager Liz Knight uses the garden and countryside to create fabulous preserves and recipes for tasty autumn dishes

PHOTOGRAPHS JOHN CAMPBELL

Liz Knight can often be seen striding across the countryside of Herefordshire and Monmouthshire, examining the hedges and edges for wild food bounty. This mum of three and entrepreneur has created a business selling exciting sauces, preserves and flavourings made in her kitchen with ingredients foraged from the garden and countryside. She sells them on her website, in select delis and farmshops and at farmers' markets, and delights in spreading enthusiasm for cooking with fresh, free produce.

'My mum was a biology teacher, and we used to spend a lot of time in the garden,' Liz explains. 'I'm one of those children of the late 1970s who were outside an awful lot. It's called 'wild play' now, but it was just 'play' when we were kids! That love of the outdoors never left me.' As an adult, she worked in the corporate sector for a number of years, but 'it didn't feel right'. Then she was made redundant. 'I spent that summer growing on a bit of land we had →



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Liz forages for hedgerow bounty throughout the year, and experiments with wild and botanical ingredients to create new pairings for sauces, rubs, dips and vinegars; autumn brings wild damsons and haws; elderberries can be used to make pontack (a good substitute for Worcestershire sauce or balsamic vinegar) or used to make a sauce for venison (*see page 96*); cobnuts become ripe towards the end of September; common hogweed seeds add a spicy flavour; chickweed is great as a green garnish.



→ bought. It was really fertile, but we had no money, so I had to propagate everything from scratch. And I started picking lots of things from the hedgerows. For the first time since university, I found I had time to do activities I loved as a child, that made me happy - it turns out that being made redundant was a really good thing for me.'

Having found work at a day centre for older people, Liz met a group of farming widows who talked to her about traditional country food and wild plants. 'I learned a lot from them. We have an amazing food folk heritage and culture in Britain, and I decided I wanted to create something that celebrated that food and the people behind it.'

After her second child was born, Liz looked at booking stalls at some markets, so she could work from home. 'I didn't know how the idea would grow and how much interest there would be in it. I did a few farmers' markets and everything sold out, and the whole thing sparked from there.'

Now, under the name Forage Fine Foods, she sells a range of rubs, vinegars, sauces, preserves, jellies and syrups made from wild and garden plants, and holds courses encouraging people to try making things themselves. 'If you are interested in foraging,' she advises, 'start with plants you know; the things in your garden, like dandelions. There are so many things to do, and so many ways you can use one plant. There is quite a macho culture around foraging, where people are trying to find something unusual, but the plants that I use are all quite conventional. But you have to be careful, because the most toxic compounds in the world come from plants. Use the things you know to begin with.'

She cites as an example hawthorn, which is used traditionally in every season, medicinally and for food. 'In early spring, the buds are tender and delicious in salads - they used to be called 'bread and cheese', as they have a nutty flavour.' The young leaves can be used like parsley, and the blossoms will flavour syrups. The haws can be used for lots of recipes including Liz's hawberry ketchup. 'It's an adventure,' she says. 'Don't be afraid to use what's around you and play with ingredients.'

On the following pages, Liz has provided three recipes using foraged autumn produce. If you would like to learn more, she will be hosting 'A Wild Taste of the Hedgerow' at Kate Humble's farm on 3 October (www.humblebynature.com). For more on her other courses and feasts or her range, see www.foragefinefoods.com



Staghorn sumac roasted carrots with wild sorrel & goats cheese

Walk down any street, in new towns or ancient villages, and you'll be hard pressed not to find a prize specimen of the staghorn sumac tree. The velvet berry clusters look like flocked light bulbs, and the flavour they hold is equally electric - sour, salty and tangy. The berries pair incredibly well with sweet carrots. After harvesting, break off clusters and crumble the berries into a bowl - lick your fingers, and you'll see what all the fuss is about. You can use the berries fresh, or dry them and grind them into a fine powder to use for flavouring until next year's harvest.

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 tsp ground sumac
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp freshly squeezed orange juice
- 1 tsp honey
- A pinch of salt
- 500g carrots, sliced
- 100g goats cheese or feta
- A handful of wild sorrel leaves

● **Mix the olive oil**, honey, freshly squeezed orange juice, salt and sumac together, and rub into the sliced carrots.

● **Roast the carrots** for 30 minutes at 180°C (or until they are soft and starting to brown).

● **While the carrots are cooling**, thinly slice a handful of wild sorrel leaves and cut the goats cheese (or feta if you prefer) into small cubes.

● **Stir the sorrel** into the cooled carrots, and sprinkle the cheese cubes on top. →



Vension with cobnut & elderberry dressing & spiced squash

Up and down the country, people in the know have squirrelled away on their spice shelves little jars filled with the papery dried seeds of common hogweed. Just like wise people in Persia and Russia, these people with their jars of seeds know that common hogweed is one of the most magical of spices, with flavours of coriander, orange, clove and nutmeg all wrapped up in a paper husk. Autumn awakens a desire for warming spice, and adds aromatic taste to the most symbolic of autumnal vegetables: squash, with vension and a hedgerow dressing.

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 medium-sized squash
- 1 venison loin (or you can use four steaks)
- A handful of thyme
- Seeds from 1 hogweed umbel
- A small knob of butter, melted
- Olive oil
- A few glugs of sweet elderberry vinegar
- A handful of cobnuts, roasted and chopped
- Salt and pepper for seasoning
- Sprigs of chickweed and herbs

- **Preheat the oven** to 200°C.
- **Either halve the squash** and scoop out the seeds to roast, or peel and cut into 2cm cubes. Add a drizzle of olive oil, hogweed seeds and thyme leaves, and season with salt and pepper.
- **Place in the oven**, checking the squash at intervals to make sure it is not burning. When it is soft and starts to caramelise, it is cooked.
- **Meanwhile, rub the venison** with olive oil, cracked black pepper and salt. Sear the meat in a hot frying pan with the melted butter, browning all over.
- **Place the venison** in an ovenproof dish and cook in the oven for 15 minutes (for medium rare) or until it's cooked to your taste. Venison is lean and dries out quickly, so don't overcook. Rest before slicing.
- **For the dressing**, mix the elderberry vinegar (find this recipe at www.theenglishgarden.co.uk) with a few glugs of olive oil and the cobnuts (or hazelnuts) in a bowl. Squash some of the elderberries from the vinegar with the back of a fork and add to the dressing.
- **Serve the rested venison** on the roasted squash, drizzled with the elderberry dressing. Garnish with chickweed and herbs.





Damson cake

Damsons ripen as autumn days bring a desire for comfort food and warming mugs of tea. The sour fruit is a perfect ingredient in this sticky molten cake, which is equally delicious as a tea-time treat or served with greek yoghurt or damson ice cream as a grown-up dessert.

Serves 10

Ingredients

- 1kg damsons
- 200g sugar
- 150g dark chocolate (60% cocoa is ideal)
- 100g butter
- 50ml whole milk
- 375g self-raising flour
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 100g cocoa powder
- 1 level tsp baking powder
- 150ml cream

- **Place the damsons in a pan** with a splash of water. Cook them over a low heat until soft, stirring to ensure they don't stick to the bottom of the pan.
- **When soft, press the damsons** through a sieve and collect the damson purée in a heatproof Pyrex or metal bowl (you will need to push through 300g of damson purée).
- **Place the bowl over a pan** of hot water and put on a medium heat. Stir in the sugar, butter and 75g of the chocolate.
- **Once the ingredients have melted**, add the milk, and take the mixture off the heat, allowing it to cool slightly.
- **Stir in the flour, cocoa powder** and baking powder, and finally mix in the eggs, stirring until you have a smooth, thick batter.
- **Pour the mixture** into a large lined cake tin. Place in the oven low, at 120°C and cook for three hours, or until a skewer comes out clean.
- **Once the cake is cooked** and cooled, coat it with a silky ganache. Melt the remaining chocolate in a *bain-marie* and then stir in the cream.
- **Decorate the cake** with nuts, berries or edible flowers. ♦

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ABOVE The Japanese garden, part of a private property on The Bishops Avenue in London. This area is enclosed by a fence of hand-tied bamboo and there is no groundcover planting or grass, just skilfully raked gravel and moss. Azaleas give a splash of colour in early summer.

HIDDEN GARDENS of London

We enjoy a sneak preview of three city gardens that feature in a lavish new book on London's beautiful spaces, many of which are rarely or never open to the public →

PHOTOGRAPHS HUGO RITTON-THOMAS | **WORDS** VICTORIA SUMMERLEY



The Bishops Avenue, Hampstead

ABOVE The summerhouse is framed by mature trees and shrubs, which hide the boundaries of the garden.

Even if you did not know that The Bishops Avenue was one of the world's wealthiest residential districts, it would soon dawn on you. It takes a good 10 minutes to stroll past one house.

From a gardening point of view, conditions are surprisingly damp. Two streams pass through the area, and one surfaces just after The Bishops Avenue. The soil is mainly London clay, notoriously hard to work. Bob Hughes, who maintains the garden, knows this well. He has a continuous battle with moss in the lawn.

The large terrace, with several seating areas, curves to link up with the recreation wing with its swimming pool, with both inside and outside sections. The terrace is planted simply, with colourful bedding and topiary.

The large lawn, about one acre, is pristine, mown with stripes, and then cross-mown to give a chequerboard effect. Hughes uses a pedestrian petrol mower, a Hayter 56, about the largest you can get before a ride-on model.

At either end are two Modified Social Benches, by the Danish artist Jeppe Hein. Hein's benches typically have some sort of subtle distortion, and are a clue that all is not what it seems in this garden. The shed on the

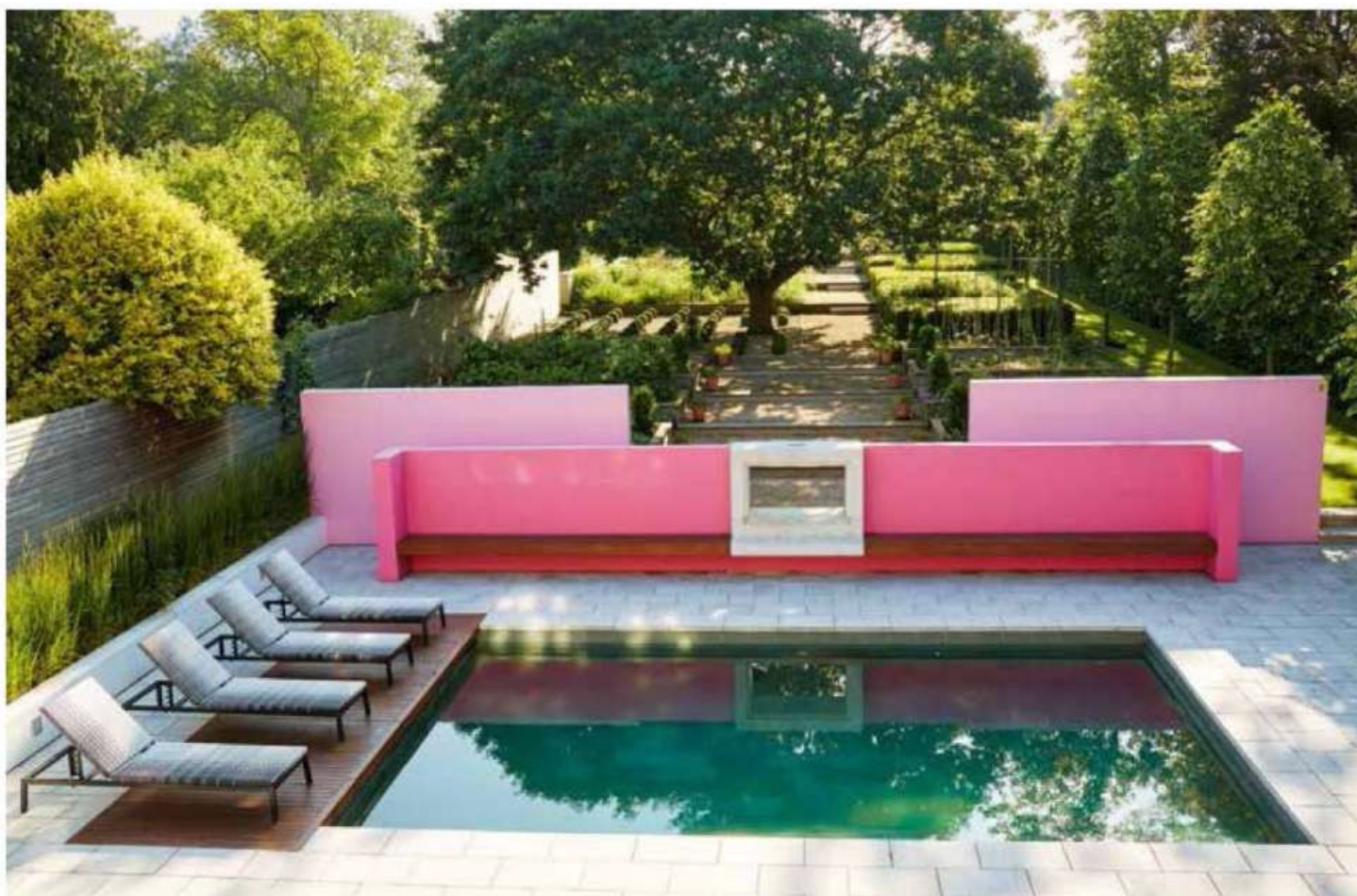
terrace, with a turquoise-blue fake palm tree beside it, is in fact an artwork by Brazilian artist Alexandre da Cunha. In front of the recreation wing is an Antony Gormley sculpture in cast iron. Another Gormley stands just inside the house. This garden belongs to someone who collects and loves art.

Most of the garden is surrounded by mature trees. The southern boundary features a woodland area, next to which is the Japanese garden - Hughes' favourite part. It is composed of rocks amid raked gravel, and acers behind a hand-tied bamboo fence. In early summer, azaleas bloom in vibrant pinks and reds.

A summerhouse, a simple, modern design in wood and glass, looks on to the Japanese garden. An acer is planted in the centre of the summerhouse, in what is effectively a glass box that is open to the sky. On the other side, where the woodland walk begins, there are more acers, and the effect is a blurring of the boundaries - you cannot see where the trees end and the building begins.

Although Bob Hughes constantly wages war on the moss growing in the lawn, in the Japanese garden he battles to stop grass growing in the carpet of moss. The irony is not lost on him. In this garden, full of art, he would probably be comforted by the 18th-century landscape architect William Kent's view that 'all gardening is landscape painting'.

A summerhouse, a modern design in wood and glass, looks on to the Japanese garden



Fairfield, Dulwich

This contemporary garden lies behind a red-brick, Queen Anne-style house in Dulwich Village, built in the 1920s. The glass walls of the living room look onto a contemporary garden with a swimming pool in the foreground.

Beside the pool, designed by ACQ Architects, who remodelled the house, a long raised bed is planted with *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster'. Beyond the pool, behind two painted rendered walls in vivid pink, lies a vegetable garden composed of generous raised beds.

The first thing that strikes you is the simplicity of the garden's design. It is based on rectangular blocks that unite the swimming pool and raised vegetable beds, as well as, beyond these, the stepped, monolithic hedge of yew. Opposite the yew, a large oak is underplanted with box balls on a neat diagonal grid. A central path entices you up to a second terrace, with a fishpond flanked by two raised beds planted with grasses and perennials such as golden rod (solidago), penstemons and veronicastrum.

From the house, it is not immediately obvious that the garden is L-shaped. You are just beginning to wonder how big it really is when you spot a shallow flight of steps leading to a large lawn on the left that stretches away to a wooden deck at the far end. Either side of the lawn are corridors formed of hornbeam hedges, the inner ones lower than the outer ones.

It comes as no surprise that the designer is Christopher Bradley-Hole

An opening in the hedge on the right of the lawn reveals a wild woodland area with a shed, compost heap and a bug 'hotel' built from wooden pallets and bricks, fir cones, bamboo canes, string bags for collecting leaves, and bits of piping. Walk back down towards the fishpond terrace and the woodland area becomes a more formal line of white birches.

On the other side of the lawn, there is another opening in the hornbeam hedges, giving way to a mini orchard. It has espaliers against next door's fence and free-standing trees in rough grass.

It comes as no surprise to discover that the designer is Christopher Bradley-Hole. The garden has his trademarks: the sense of serenity you get from a design that is perfectly proportioned, and his attention to detail - the green roofs on the two little sheds behind the swimming pool, for example.

The 400-year reign of the Dulwich estate has protected the village from the piecemeal, high-rise development of other south London boroughs nearby, and the new is carefully blended with the old. A bit like Christopher Bradley-Hole's garden design. →

ABOVE The bright pink walls are reminiscent of the work of Luis Barragán, the Mexican architect famous for his use of colour and light.



Ormeley Lodge, Ham

ABOVE Herbaceous planting around the lawn includes peonies and poppies.

Ormeley Lodge, which lies just inside Richmond Park, is the home of Lady Annabel Goldsmith. She has lived here since the 1970s, along with Zac, Jemima and Ben - her children by her second husband, Sir James Goldsmith.

The front garden, designed by Mary Keen, has large box 'plinths', from which containers planted with white pelargoniums emerge. There's a huge *Magnolia grandiflora* to the right of the front door, while wisteria is trained across the house. A gate leads to a knot garden, designed by Arabella Lennox-Boyd, in two colours of box, with standard holly trees. Behind the house, a formal terrace echoes the planting at the front, with more box 'plinths' around containers planted with white summer bedding. The furniture, with its unusual trellis design, is 18th century. It is stored every winter, and repainted white once a year.

To the right of the terrace, an area known as the 'paddock' begins with an avenue of *Prunus x subhirtella* 'Autumnalis', again designed by Mary Keen. A statue of a gorilla - a present from zookeeper John Aspinall to Sir James Goldsmith - lurks beneath a huge Atlas cedar. The grass in the paddock grows long, with paths mown through it. It is also home to Buff Orpington chickens and a gypsy caravan.

From the paddock you enter the wild garden, or orchard, where spring bulbs such as camassias and

daffodils grow amid a carpet of cowslips in spring. To the right, behind a high yew hedge, is the kitchen garden and an aviary, with budgerigars and cockatiels.

Walking back to the house, past the rhino grazing beneath the apple trees (another present), you reach the swimming pool, surrounded by magnolia, clematis and ornamental vines. Behind a hedge near the pool is another aviary, home to canaries. From here, the path leads down beside the tennis court to an arbour, clothed in scented *Trachelospermum jasminoides*, from where the less energetic can watch the play. Head gardener Steven Hannigan designed the beds either side of this garden walk - they feature a large tree of heaven and herbaceous perennials planted between piers of bay.

Meanwhile, at the back of the garden, ornamental gates look out on to Richmond Golf Club. It is quite a shock to see a group of golfers, but not as much of a shock as it is to get a golf ball through the greenhouse roof, says Hannigan, drily. He has prudently replaced the glass with polycarbonate.

This is an abridged extract from *Great Gardens of London* by Victoria Summerley (Frances Lincoln, £30) with images by Hugo Rittson-Thomas and Marianne Majerus. On sale from 1 October 2015.



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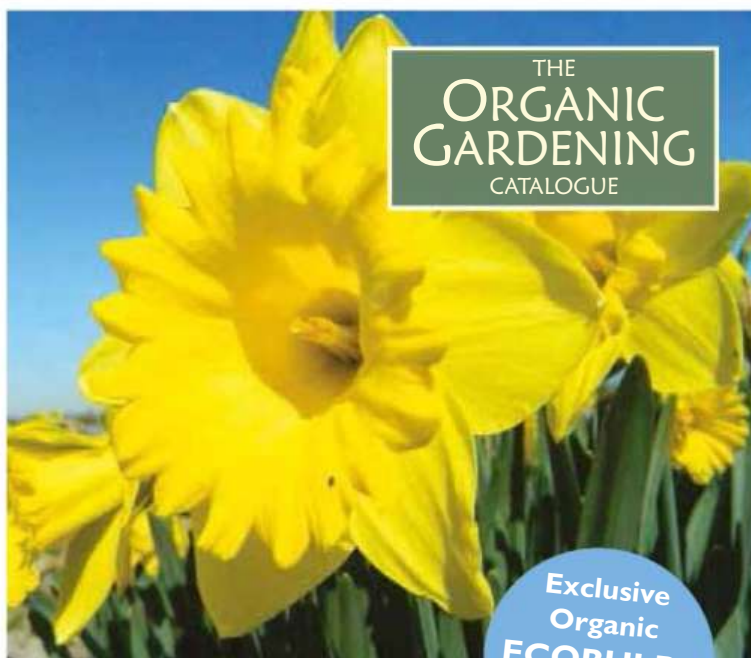
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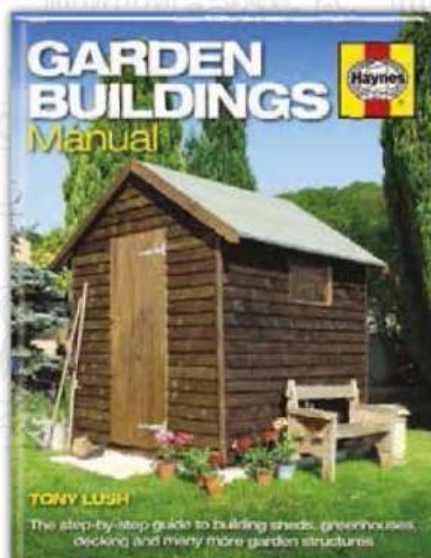
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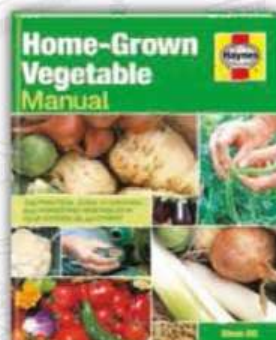
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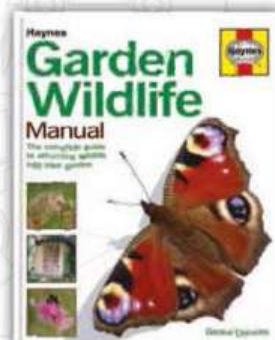
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THE REVIEWER

Carol Klein tells us about her new book, and we take our pick of the new releases, including an enchanting book raising funds for Horatio's Garden

BOOK REVIEWS

The Gardens Of Arne Maynard

by Arne Maynard (Merrell, £45)

With its strikingly drawn endpapers of snake's head fritillaries, you know this is going to be a beautiful book as soon as you open it.

Written by Arne Maynard himself, it begins with a sensitive introduction in which he describes his childhood garden experiences and crucial early visits to gardens. It is telling that his first love was for plants, with how to use

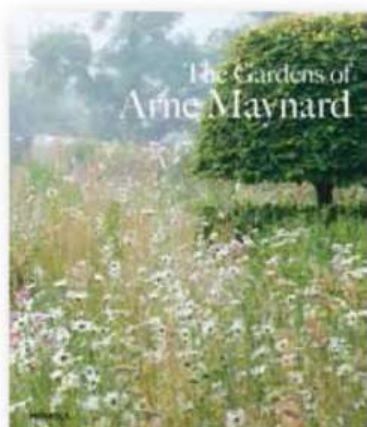
them developing later. When designing a garden, he will seek out specialist nurseries, find the right plants for the place - above all, respect the site, and make gardens that will last.

In this book, he describes 12 gardens, starting with Alt-y-bela where Arne and his partner William Collinson now live. William took all the photographs for this book, and they are breathtaking, capturing light and atmosphere, evoking and understanding Arne's designs. At intervals, the focus is on garden essentials: topiary, borders, kitchen gardens and, with an Arts and Crafts ethos, craftsmanship. Full of practical design ideas, I found myself noting down the names of roses, perennials and garden details.

Arne's writing is eloquent and unpretentious. It gets to the spirit of each place, just as he has done with the gardens he has created for each site. This feeling for the land leads to a garden that is in harmony with its surroundings, and the book is a fascinating insight into his design process.

With its thick, sumptuous paper, every turn of the page is a delight. There's enough space around the text and the photographs to show them to their best advantage, while some images go right to the edges of the paper. Two of these even unfold into large panoramas that immerse you in garden and landscape. The design of the book is a mixture of exuberance and restraint - a fitting response to the work of this great garden designer.

Reviewed by Susie White



Oxford College Gardens

by Tim Richardson (Frances Lincoln, £40)

Oxford may be known as 'the city of dreaming spires' in honour of its architecture. But the city has a lesser-known beauty hidden away from the thousands of visitors who flock to the city every year from all over the world.

This is the first college-by-college guide to the University of Oxford's gardens. The university has 38 colleges - each self-governing, financially independent and possessing its own distinct spirit and character, from the fine honey-coloured Neoclassical architecture of Magdalen College to the modernist design of St Catherine's College. It naturally follows, then, that the garden of each college reflects its individual identity - which makes for fascinating and unexpected diversity.

In this lavish coffee table book, we're treated to a detailed look at the gardens of 32 of the colleges, plus the university's parks, and its botanic garden - which was founded in 1621 - is the oldest in Britain, and holds one of the most diverse plant collections in the world. From the diminutive Corpus Christi College with its exuberant plantings of bamboo and irrepressible 'Eton mess' borders, to the vast scale of Christchurch College, the wide open lawns of Trinity College, huge banana leaves flapping in the breeze in the hot border at Balliol College, and snake's head fritillaries as far as the eye can see in the water meadow at Magdalen College. And then there's Worcester College, with its lake, arboretum, Arts and Crafts rose garden, orchard, hanging garden, velvety lawns and sumptuous herbaceous borders. We're also given a rare glimpse into the fellows' gardens, usually kept resolutely private.

The text by Tim Richardson helps flesh out the background, but Andrew Lawson's photographs are the stars of the show.

The perfect gift for anyone whose alma mater is featured, this book would be an absorbing read for any gardener or Anglophile.

Reviewed by Sarah Feeley →



INTERVIEW

We asked Carol Klein about her new book *Making A Garden* (Mitchell Beazley, £25).

Tell us about your new book.

Its subtitle is '*Successful Gardening by Nature's Rules*' - and it does exactly what it says on the tin! It's about the way I garden, the way that gardening works best. All gardens are artificial - they're not nature - but I've always thought it's vital to try and emulate nature wherever possible, and I garden organically.

I've always hated the idea of control - 'managed space' is great, but I don't want to boss plants about. It's about trying to encourage plants to be themselves, to do and be what they want, and about choosing plants that are going to love the place they live.

I often think there should be a Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Plants - people sometimes try and make plants do things that they shouldn't! There are millions of plants we can grow in our gardens, so these people are ignoring the opportunities available to them, or just being awkward about it.

I've always felt like this. I'm a great believer in common sense, it informs everybody's successful gardening. It's about regarding gardening as a privilege - that's what's enjoyable, and how you get the most out of it.

Tell us about the directories in the book.

The book has quite a strong structure, it's divided into chunks featuring different habitats, and I thought a directory at the end of each (featuring a lot of plants I've referred to in the text) would finish it off. The whole book could have been one big directory! I've tried to include things that people will find useful and interesting. It's quite an unusual



thing to do to include case study gardens - they are all very different, all good examples, and hopefully people will derive a lot of inspiration from them.

At whom did you aim this book?

Anybody who wants to garden - from the novice who has never picked up a trowel or fork, to seasoned gardeners; they can both gain just as much from the book.

I used to be an art teacher long ago, and I was a great believer that everybody can paint pictures. In the same way, I think everybody can garden. It's a common sense thing.

I write like I talk. It's never a question of the lowest common denominator, and it's the same when I do telly, and I enjoy that too.

I want this book to be useful. I didn't just write it so I could get paid the advance - it's not about that at all. I've got something to say. I'm a great believer in gardening being good for you, on every level. If everybody got the opportunity to get their hands in the soil, the world would be a better place.

OCTOBER'S FRESH PICKINGS

RHS Lessons from Great Gardeners

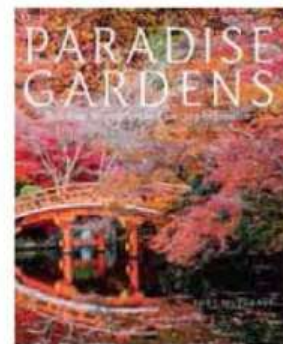
by Matthew Biggs
(Mitchell Beazley, £14.99)



This book's premise is brilliant: profiles of 40 global gardening icons throughout history - from Thomas Jefferson to Will Giles via Monet, Jekyll, Oudolf *et al* - including their expert tips. Despite some jarring design choices (the matte paper that sucks the light and life out of each photo, the odd cartoonish gardener portraits, the cramped feeling of condensing a coffee table book into a smaller format), there's interesting content and fine illustrations.

Paradise Gardens

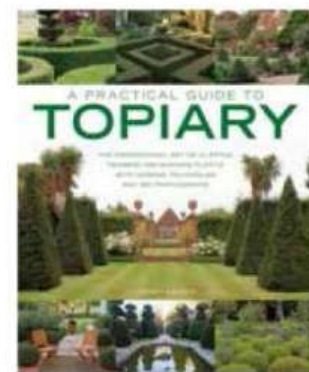
by Toby Musgrave
(Frances Lincoln, £30)



Plants and gardens have been intertwined with religion and belief since the dawn of time. In his new book, Toby Musgrave explores 17 belief systems and the roles played by plants and gardens, setting each in its historical context. With sumptuous photography and a wealth of interesting information, this big glossy book is well worth reading.

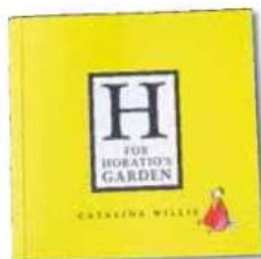
Topiary

by Jenny Hendy
(Lorenz Books, £7.99)



This is a fresh take on Jenny Hendy's original book about topiary, now out of print, which Piet Oudolf called 'a great inspiration for people, modern or conservative, wishing to create form and shape with greenery'. Updated and reformatted, it's packed with useful information and tips, and full of photographs showcasing a bewildering diversity of topiary.

Young artist pens book in Horatio's memory



A teenager has written and illustrated a new book to raise money for Horatio's Garden.

This charity builds beautiful gardens for patients at NHS spinal treatment centres, with one in Salisbury and others planned for Stoke Mandeville and Scotland.

H For Horatio's Garden was created by 14-year-old Catalina Willis, god-daughter of Olivia Chapple, mother of Horatio, in whose memory the charity was founded. The book is a whimsical romp around the alphabet. Priced £20, all proceeds go to the charity. Buy online at www.shop.horatiogarden.org.uk



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Established for 25 years, Woottens is a traditional plant nursery specialising in hardy perennials, with one of the largest collections of irises in England, which is open for viewing every year. Woottens also specialises in auriculas, pelargoniums, hemerocallis and violas. Mail order and design services. Qualified and passionate staff offering expert advice. Gardens open April–October. Open days and events held throughout the year. Horticultural courses running weekly. See website for more details.

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2

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Tel: +44 (0)1483 284769

Email: info@springreachnursery.co.uk | Website: www.springreachnursery.co.uk
Spring Reach Nursery, Long Reach, Ockham, Surrey GU23 6PG

3

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Tel: +44 (0)1938 555145 | Email: info@dinglenurseryandgarden.co.uk

Website: www.dinglenurseryandgarden.co.uk

Dingle Nurseries, Frochas, nr.Welshpool, Powys, SY21 9JD

4

LONG ACRE PLANTS



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Tel: +44 (0)1963 32802

Email: info@plantsforshade.co.uk | Website: www.plantsforshade.co.uk
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5

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Tel: +44 (0)1524 793104

Email: info@daisyclough.com | Website: www.daisyclough.com
Daisy Clough Nurseries Ltd, Station Lane, Scorton, Preston, Lancashire PR3 1AN

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| Beech, Green 60-90cm trans. | £8.90 | £39.00 | Mixed Native Hedging seedlings | £6.00 | £22.00 |
| Beech, Green 90-120cm trans. | £12.90 | £59.00 | Mixed Native Hedging 60-90cm trans. | £9.40 | £35.00 |
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| Blackthorn 60-90cm seedlings | £5.30 | £23.00 | Privet, Wild 60-90cm bare root | £11.50 | £53.00 |
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| Box, Common 20-30cm trans. | £14.90 | £69.00 | Quickthorn 40-60cm seedlings | £3.50 | £15.00 |
| Box, Dwarf 10-15cm pot grown | £24.90 | £115.00 | Quickthorn 60-90cm seedlings | £4.70 | £20.00 |
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One of my favourite gardens is Cambridge University Botanic Garden. I was a student there, and worked there as well. It's especially lovely in autumn and winter. It's a magical oasis in the heart of the city; go through the gate, and you're in another world.



The thing I covet most for my garden is more space. I'd like a larger terrace. A garden needs a revamp every 10 years or so, and our decked area is 11 or 12 years old. I'd like to replace it with stone. It will be a good project for autumn, when it's not too hot, but still light in the evenings.

MY FAVOURITE THINGS

Toby Buckland

The nurseryman, TV gardener and author picks his top tools, plants and garden features



One of my favourite plants is nicotiana. It love it for its evening fragrance in summer. The plants are so long-serving, and I like that fact that they self-deadhead, and pop up year on year in unusual places. 'Fragrant Cloud' is a short but very scented cultivar.



A tool I'm enjoying at the moment is my oscillating hoe. It has a hinged head that makes a satisfying rattling noise as you push it back and forth. It's good for a quick whisk over dry, light ground.

My favourite part of my own garden is my greenhouse. It's a home-made one that was originally built for a show. It's made of recycled timber from an old dock, recycled window panes, stone walls at the base, and raised beds. In summer, it's full of salads and herbs, and in autumn, edible pelargoniums that give a Turkish Delight flavour, and leaves such as rocket.

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